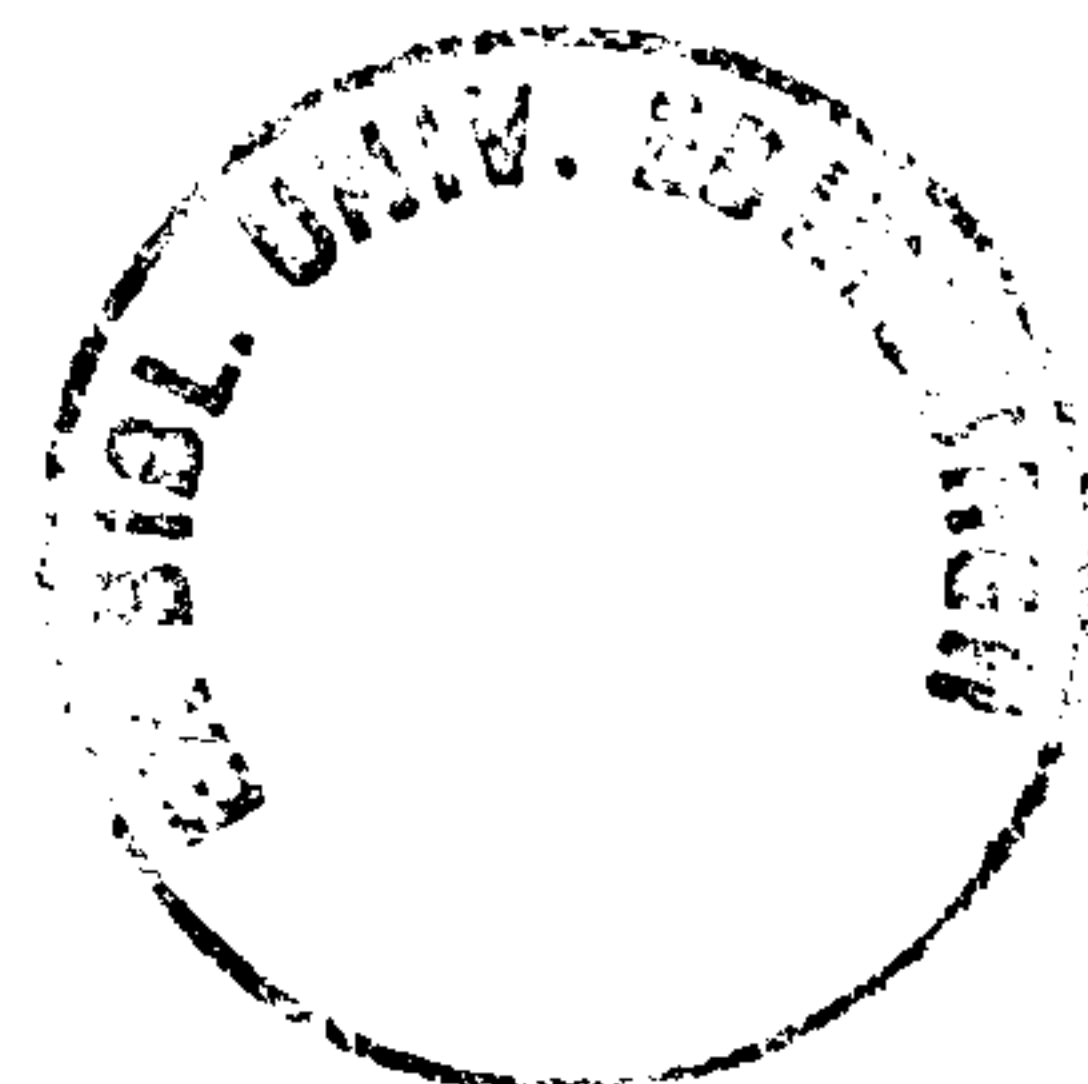


SCOTLAND AND PHILIP II, 1580-1598: POLITICS, RELIGION, DIPLOMACY AND LOBBYING

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the political, diplomatic and religious relations between Spain and Scotland, during the last two decades of Philip II of Spain's life.

Until 1566-68, Spain and England conserved peaceful relations despite a few minor incidents. Philip II abstained from favouring the Catholic Mary Stewart, a Guise, instead of Elizabeth. If he had supported her, he would have risked dangerously increasing France's influence. But, with the English support of the rebels in the Netherlands and the English attacks on the Spanish Atlantic fleet, Philip considered the suggestion advocated by lobbyists from Britain that he should assault England through its traditional enemy and 'back gate' Scotland.

The Spanish monarch, obsessively devoted to his faith, was tremendously concerned with restoring Roman Catholicism to the British Isles; however, he also knew that instability inside the Isle could mean the end of English aid to the rebels in the Netherlands and a cessation of the English piracy and privateering; moreover, Scotland could have been used as a secure base in the North Sea.

This Spanish interest was welcomed in the realm of Scotland not only by the many discontents, some Catholics, some not, who saw in Spain a new 'El Dorado' – the source of money, troops and employment. Religion often produced clear loyalties, as for example, the collaborations of the earls of Huntly, Angus and Errol with Spain, i.e. their involvement in the 'Spanish Blanks' in 1593. But other loyalties were often confusing. For example, Francis Stewart, the earl of Bothwell, a Protestant by education, who made brief collaborations with Spain. Even in the Scottish court, there was a considerable political debate; while Mary was still prisoner, James VI was swaying between Spain and England, looking for money and an assurance of his succession to the English throne after Queen Elizabeth's death.

The period between 1580 and 1588 was characterized by the Jesuit mission to Scotland and the preparations for the Spanish Armada of 1588. In the early 1580s, the Pope gave permission for a Jesuit mission, financed by Spain, to be sent to Scotland to restore the 'true' faith, which functioned until 1583, when it became clear that only an armed invasion would eliminate Protestantism from the Isle.

Despite the failure of the Armada, its purpose was not forgotten by Philip II nor the Scots. The plan of an invasion through Scotland was not dismissed, but was waiting for a 'more propitious time.' The characteristic of this period of ten years, between the Armada and the death of Philip II of Spain in 1598, was the unrealistic plans for invasions being hatched in Spain, and the divisions between those who supported a Spanish or a Scottish candidature for the English throne, and the fear of a Spanish-Catholic conspiracy in the realm.

Nevertheless, everything was over after the death of Philip II. While Spain was ruined and suffocating with problems, James VI was reinforcing his alliance with Elizabeth I, and was assuring his accession to the English throne. The hope of restoration of the Catholic faith in the Isle was only kept by William and Hugh Sempill; now the only hope of the Scottish Catholics was the Scots College in Madrid.

This study is based principally on manuscript sources, many of them rarely and some of them never previously used. Eleven archives were used for this work: Archivo General de Simancas, Valladolid; Biblioteca Nacional de España, Madrid; Nacional Library of Scotland, Edinburgh; Public Record Office, London; the British Library, London; Library of the Nacional Maritime Museum, Greenwich; Cambridge University Library, Cambridge; Archivio di Statu Firenze, Mediceo del Principato; and the Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University Library, Utah.

DECLARATION

I hereby cerfity that this thesis is of my own composition; that it is the result of my own work; and that no part of it has been published in its present form.

Signed.....

Concepción Sáenz-Cambra
At Edinburgh, March 2003

In 1919, Peter Brown wrote:
‘We historians can judge consequences better than
politicians who look at events from too near.’¹
I hope he was right!

¹ P.H. Brown, *Surveys of Scottish History* (Glasgow, 1919), p. ix.

CONTENTS

Acknowledgements.....	vi
Conventions and Abbreviations.....	viii
Preface.....	xii

Introduction.....	1
--------------------------	----------

Part I – Before the Spanish Armada –

Chapter I

The beginning of the Spanish Interest and Relations with Scotland, 1580-1584.....	23
The Struggle for the Young King of Scotland	23
The Jesuit Intrigues of 1580-1582.....	32
Conspiracy and Crisis.....	63

Chapter II

The Road to the Spanish Armada, 1584-1588.....	77
James VI's <i>Ius Suum Conservare</i> , 1584-1586.....	77
Mary Queen of Scots's Final Days and the Prelude to the Great Armada.....	96
The Rise of Colonel William Sempill and the Spanish Armada.....	119

Part II – After the Spanish Armada –

Chapter III

The Aftermath of the Spanish Armada, 1588-1592.....	130
Wrecks and Survivors, 1588-1589.....	130
The Apotheosis of the Scottish Nobility's Relations with Spain.....	142

Chapter IV

<i>Crescendo</i> , Settlement and Death.....	174
--	-----

Conclusion	199
-------------------------	------------

Appendix I

Deciphered letter of don Bernardino de Mendoza, 16 September 1580	
Transcription into Spanish.....	208
Translation into English.....	208

Appendix II

Don Bernardino de Mendoza to Mary Queen of Scots, 4 April 1586	
Transcription into Spanish.....	209
Translation into English.....	209

Appendix III

Instructions for Colonel Sempill from the duke of Parma, 12 November 1589	
Transcription into Spanish.....	210

Translation into English.....211

Appendix IV

Colonel William Sempill, ‘On Scottish Affairs,’ 1591

Transcription into Spanish.....212

Translation into English.....214

Appendix V

Letter of Philip II of Spain to Diego de Chavez Orellana, 5 February 1593

Original.....216

Transcription into Spanish.....217

Translation into English.....218

Appendix VI

Letter of Philip II of Spain to Diego de Chavez Orellana, 1 May 1593

Original.....219

Transcription into Spanish.....220

Translation into English.....220

Appendix VII

Letter of Philip II of Spain to Diego de Chavez Orellana, 22 May 1593

Original.....221

Transcription into Spanish.....222

Translation into English.....222

Bibliography

Manuscript Sources.....223

Printed Primary Sources.....225

Contemporary Writings.....228

Secondary Sources: Monographs.....229

Articles.....234

Unpublished Theses.....236

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I am heartily thankful to Dr Julian Goodare for the many suggestions he made on points both of matter and of style. His critical acumen and wide knowledge saved me from many errors of omission as well as of commission that I care to remember. Moreover, he was unfailingly encouraging when personal circumstances made it more difficult to complete my doctorate.

To Miss Mía Rodríguez-Salgado, Professor in International History at London School of Economics, I am also in greatly indebted for the care and discrimination with which she read my works, for the fruitful interchange of opinion, and for the numerous occasions when her eye detected ambiguities which I myself failed to discover owing to too great familiarity with the written work. I am profoundly grateful to Professor Felipe Fernández-Armesto, Fellow of St Anthony's College, Oxford, for his unfailing courtesy. Both have in different ways contributed materially to the readability and, I dare hope also, to the usefulness of this research.

I have received invaluable assistance from many archivists and librarians, and in particular the officials of the British Library, the Public Record Office, the Library of the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich, Cambridge University Library, Oxford University Library, the National Library of Scotland, the Scottish Catholic Archives, Edinburgh University Library, the Archivo General de Simancas, the Biblioteca Nacional de España and the Harold B. Lee Library of Brigham Young

University. My thanks are due to the Arts and Humanities Research Board, the Columba Trust, Edinburgh University's Arts Faculty, and the British Federation of Women Graduates, who have funded this research. I trust that all other formal obligations have been recorded in the footnotes.

I cannot attempt to name here all the friends who have come to my aid, but I have to acknowledge with gratitude Dr David Worthington, lecturer at the National University of Ireland, and Mr Walter Deas, international expert in archaeological maritime excavations, who had the great kindness to read my proofs and assist me with their wide knowledge. It remains for me to thank heartily Pauline Maclean who in many occasions saved me from failing in the tortuous arms of academic bureaucracy.

Finally, I dedicate this thesis to Rikard Kjellqvist, the real supervisor and tenth muse of this thesis. His studies are economic rather than historical or political, but it is clear that his personal charm lies most obviously in his thought: a new Goethe who looks upon as the greatest critic of life since Aristotle. No one has had better opportunities than I have been privileged to possess of watching the growth of the sense of that harmony in his mind. For once I cannot find words to express my gratitude: thank you!

CONVENTIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Money: To avoid confusion and facilitate comparisons, all sums of Spanish money mentioned in this thesis are given in Spanish crowns, each one roughly equivalent in the later sixteenth century to one ducat, or to one *escudo*, or two florins or fourteen *reals*. About four Spanish crowns made up one pound sterling.²

All other sums of money are in pounds (£s) Scots unless otherwise stated. A merk was 13s. 4d., two-thirds of a £ Scots. In 1567, the English £ (sterling) was equal to about £4.10s. Scots at par, and the French crown to £1.6s.8d. Scots; by 1601, they were worth £12 Scots and £3.6s.8d. Scots respectively. The Scottish currency was pegged to the English in 1603, and from then until 1625, there were no major fluctuations in currency values.³

Dates: These are given in old style (i.e. Julian calendar), but with the year beginning on 1 January.

Style: Contemporary documents are quoted in the original spelling. Translations have been modernised, and those not otherwise attributed are my own. They may be in revised spelling if quoted from a modern edition which has adopted that policy. Non-English quotations have been translated for ease of reading

English version of names of well-known people such as Philip II himself are used, but otherwise non-English names have been left so.

The following abbreviations are used:

AGS	Archivo General de Simancas
CE	Consejo de Estado
E	Estado
ANP	Archivo National Paris
APC	<i>Acts of the Privy Council of England</i> , 32 vols, ed. J.R. Dasent (London, 1890-1907)

² See G. Parker, *The Grand Strategy of Philip II* (London, 1998), p. xiii.

³ See J. Goodare, *State and Society in Early Modern Scotland* (Oxford, 1999), p. xi.

ASF	Archivio di Stato di Firenze
MdP	Mediceo del Principato
BL	British Library
Add.	Additional Manuscripts
Cott.	Cottonian
Eg.	Egerton
BNM	Biblioteca Nacional de España, Madrid
est.	estado
Calderwood, <i>History</i>	D. Calderwood, <i>History of the Kirk of Scotland</i> , 8 vols, eds. T. Thomson & D. Laing (Wodrow Society, 1842-9)
<i>Campbell Letters</i>	<i>Campbell Letters, 1559-1583</i> , ed. J.E.A. Dawson (SHS, 1997)
cod.	<i>códice</i> [codex]
CODOIN	<i>Colección de Documentos Inéditos para la Historia de España</i> , 113 vols (Madrid, 1849-1931)
Colville, <i>Letters</i>	<i>Letters of Mr John Colville, 1582-1603</i> , ed. D. Laing (Bannatyne Club, 1858)
CHR	<i>Catholic Historical Review</i>
CRS	Catholic Record Society
CSP Dom.	<i>Calendar of State Papers, Domestic</i> , 12 vols, eds. R. Lemon & M.A.E. Green (London, 1856-72)
CSP Scot. <i>Mary,</i>	<i>Calendar of State Papers relating to Scotland and Queen of Scots, 1547-1603</i> , 13 vols, by various editors (Edinburgh, 1898-1969)
CSP Span.	<i>Calendar of Letters and State Papers relating to English Affairs, preserved principally in the Archives of Simancas</i> , 4 vols, ed. M.A.S. Hume (London, 1892-99)
CSP Ven.	<i>Calendar of State Papers and Manuscripts relating to English Affairs, existing in the archives and collections of Venice, and in other libraries of Northern Italy</i> , vols 8-9, ed. H.F. Brown (London, 1864)
CUL	Cambridge University Library
DNB	<i>The Dictionary of National Biography</i> (London, 1975)
Douglas, <i>Peerage</i>	S.R. Douglas, <i>The Peerage of Scotland: containing an historical and genealogical account of the nobility of that kingdom, from their origin to the present generation, collected from public records, ancient chartularies, the charters and other writings of nobility, works of our best historians, & c.</i> , 2 vols (Edinburgh, 1813)
<i>Edin. Recs.</i>	<i>Extracts from the Records of the Burgh of Edinburgh</i> , 5 vols (SBRS, 1869-92)
Elizabeth, <i>Letters</i>	<i>The Letters of Queen Elizabeth</i> , ed. G.B. Harrison (London, 1935)
EUL	Edinburgh University Library
fasc.	<i>fascículo</i> [fascicle]

<i>Hamilton Papers</i>	<i>The Hamilton Papers. Letters and papers illustrating the political relations of England and Scotland in the XVIth Century. Formerly in the possession of the Dukes of Hamilton, now in the British Museum, 2 vols, ed. J. Bain (Edinburgh, 1890-1892)</i>
HBL	Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University-Utah
HMC	Historical Manuscripts Commission
<i>Salisbury</i>	<i>Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Most Hon. the Marquis of Salisbury...preserved at Hatfield House, Hertfordshire, 14 vols (London, 1883-1923)</i>
<i>Hastings</i>	<i>Report on the Manuscripts of the late Reginald Rawdon Hastings, Esq., ii, ed. F. Bickley (London, 1930)</i>
<i>Sidney</i>	<i>Correspondence of Sir Robert Sidney. Report on the Manuscripts of Lord de L'isle & Dudley preserved at Penshurst place, 2 vols (London, 1934)</i>
IR	<i>Innes Review</i>
James VI, <i>Letters</i>	<i>Letters of King James VI and I, ed. G.P.V. Akrigg (Berkeley, Calif., 1984)</i>
Labanoff, <i>Lettres</i>	<i>Lettres, Instructions et Memories de Marie Stuart Reine d'Ecosse; publies sur les originaux et les manuscrits du state paper office de Londres et des principales archives et bibliotheques de l'Europe, 7 vols, ed. Prince A. Labanoff (London, 1844)</i>
Leg.	<i>Legajo [Folder]</i>
Lettenhove, <i>Relations</i>	<i>Relations Politiques de Pays-Bas et de L'Angleterre sous le Regne de Philippe II, 11 vols, ed. M.K. de Lettenhove (Brussels, 1882-1900)</i>
LNMM	Library of the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich
Mary, <i>Letters</i>	<i>Letters of Mary Queen of Scots, ed. A. Strickland (London, 1843)</i>
Melville, <i>Diary</i>	<i>Autobiography and Diary of Mr. James Melville, ed. R. Pitcairn (Wodrow Society, 1842)</i>
Moysie, <i>Memoirs</i>	<i>David Moysie, Memoirs of the Affairs of Scotland, 1577-1603, ed. J. Dennistoun (Maitland Club, 1830)</i>
NLS	National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh
ADV.	Advocates['s manuscripts]
NRS	Navy Records Society
Philip II, <i>Correspondence</i>	<i>Correspondence de Philippe II sur les Affaires de Pays-Bas, 6 vols, eds. J. Lefevre & L.P. Gachard (Tongres, 1936)</i>
Pitcairn, <i>Trials</i>	<i>Criminal Trials in Scotland, 1488-1624, 3 vols, ed. R. Pitcairn (Edinburgh, 1833)</i>
PRO	Public Record Office, London
SP	State Papers

E	Exchequer
PTS	Protestant Truth Society
RHS	Royal Historical Society
<i>RPC Scot.</i>	<i>The Register of the Privy Council of Scotland</i> , 14 vols, eds. J.H. Burton <i>et al.</i> (Edinburgh, 1877-98)
<i>RUS</i>	<i>Rice University Studies</i>
SBRS	Scottish Burgh Records Society
SCA	Scottish Catholic Archives
CA	Colleges Abroad
<i>Scots Peerage</i>	<i>The Scots Peerage</i> , 9 vols, ed. J. Balfour Paul (Edinburgh, 1904-14)
<i>SHR</i>	<i>Scottish Historical Review</i>
SHS	Scottish History Society
Spottiswoode, <i>History</i>	J. Spottiswoode, <i>History of the Church of Scotland</i> , 3 vols, eds. Russell & M. Napier (Spottiswoode Society, 1847-51)
STS	Scottish Text Society
Teulet, <i>Relations</i>	<i>Relations Politiques de la France et de l'Espagne avec l'Écosse au XVI siècle; papiers d'état, pièces et documents inédits</i> , 5 vols, ed. A. Teulet (Paris, 1862)
Theiner, <i>Annales</i>	<i>Annales Ecclesiastici quos post Caesarem S.R.E. Card. Baronivm Odoricvm Raynaldvm ac Jacobvñ Laderchivm Presbyteros congregationiis oratorii de vrbe ab an MDLXXII ad nostra vsque tempora continuat</i> , ed. A. Theiner (Rome, 1856)
UBHJ	<i>University of Birmingham Historical Journal</i>
<i>Warrender Papers</i>	<i>The Warrender Papers</i> , 2 vols, ed. A.I. Cameron (SHS, 1931-2)

PREFACE

This study is based principally on manuscript sources, many of them rarely and some of them never previously used. Eleven archives were used for this work:

- Archivo General de Simancas, Valladolid
- Biblioteca Nacional de España, Madrid
- National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh
- Scottish Catholic Archives, Edinburgh
- Edinburgh University Library, Edinburgh
- Public Record Office, London
- The British Library, London
- Library of the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich
- Cambridge University Library, Cambridge
- Archivio di Stato Firenze, Mediceo del Principato
- Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University Library, Utah

Of course, this list of major manuscript library holders concerning Philip II's relations with Scotland is far from complete. To do this subject justice would need a library, not a thesis. But the following description of primary sources – in themselves inevitably miscellaneous – and the general bibliography, pp. 246 et seq., are also necessarily concise. It has been impossible, of course, to include here more than a very small fraction of the surviving texts and, in making a selection, preference has been given to those which throw special light on contemporary views of the questions at issue or on the conduct of diplomacy. Also, I have given preference to documents which were hitherto unprinted, or in very inaccessible books. Thus, the documents transcribed and translated in the appendixes were hitherto unprinted.

In August 1998, an exhibition was opened in the Archivo de Simancas titled: 'Simancas and Philip II, an archive to govern the world.' The title could not have been more appropriate: Philip II's figure and reign are unintelligible without Simancas, and Simancas is inconceivable without Philip II. Among its over 80,000

folders of documents are preserved the official letters exchanged between Philip II and his ambassadors and governors. This correspondence was partially printed in volume xci of the *Colección de Documentos Inéditos para la Historia de España* (Madrid, 1849-1931); in volume v of Alexander Teulet's *Relations Politiques de la France et de l'Espagne avec l'Écosse au XVI siècle* (Paris, 1862); and in the *Calendar of Letters and State Papers relating to English Affairs, preserved principally in Simancas. Elizabeth 1558-[1603]*, ed. Martin A.S. Hume (London, 1892-99). Some of it was printed in the *Calendar of State Papers relating to Scotland and Mary, Queen of Scots, 1547-1603*, by various editors, xiii vols. (Edinburgh and Glasgow, 1898-1969).⁴

The collections of letters kept in the AGS used for this investigation were recorded in the 'Sección de Estado' (E) and the collection of 'diverse diplomatic documents' (K). Philip was called 'king of paper;' moreover, he did not trust anyone, which forced him to read every state paper. The pressure of official business took most of the Spanish monarch's attention and time. Subsequently, Philip was forced to reduce his involvement and letters just to important affairs.⁵ In fact, he did not have a writing routine; when something attracted his attention he would write about it. In the period 1580-98, Philip dedicated many letters to Scottish affairs; those used for this investigation were recorded in the AGS, E Legs. 833-8 and K Leg. 1448. Those of Philip's letters seized by English agents can be found in the BL, MSS II.⁶

While these are broadly the sources of this work for Philip II's letters, it has to be pointed out that not only all the principal state archives of Europe, but also of the world, contain collections of documents that might shed light on the issue. Thus, I have included as appendices V-VII three letters from Philip II to don Diego de Orellana de Chaves, royal governor of Spain's northern coasts, dated from 1593, which refer to Scottish trade with Spain. These letters, previously unpublished, come

⁴ Koenigsberger, Mosse & Bowler (eds.), *Europe in the Sixteenth Century* (London, 1989), p. 14.

⁵ Parker, *Philip II*, pp. 32-5.

⁶ The first place one should usually look is the published biographies of the King. Many great historians as H. Kamen, M. Rodríguez-Salgado, G. Parker, J.H. Elliott and P. Williams, among many others, have dedicated their lives to the study of the figure and reign of Philip II, however, none has specially focussed in Scotland.

from a privately owned collection kept by the Special Collections Department of the Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Utah. These documents have not been used in full because of their largely mercantile nature; however, they are an exceptional example of Scottish-Spanish relations in the time of naval war against France and England.

The first letter is from Philip II to Orellana, from the Escorial, dated 5 February 1593. Philip has been written to by James VI who informs him that many merchants, especially Englishmen, have forged his signature and seals in order to be able to trade in Spain. Philip orders Orellana to embargo all Scottish ships in the Cuatro Villas area (Santander, Laredo, Castro Urdiales and San Vicente de la Barquera) and to send an inventory of merchandise, especially artillery, with the exception of ships belonging to a listed number of merchants who apparently have authentic licences.⁷ The second letter is also from Philip II to Diego de Orellana de Chaves, from Aranjuez, dated 1 May 1593. In it, Philip requests that the quartermaster of a Scottish ship recently arrived in the port of Laredo come to meet with the Council of War to investigate his licence.⁸ The third letter is again from Philip II to Diego de Orellana de Chaves, from Aranjuez, dated 22 May 1593. In it, it is declared that the Scottish quartermaster has been interviewed, and that the ship should be allowed to leave if there are no irregularities discovered after Orellana interviews the men on board concerning their names, homes, and destination.⁹

Nevertheless, the sources indicate that the information that reached Philip II about Scotland was compiled or forwarded by his intelligence agents all over Europe. In the sixteenth century, it had not yet become usual for a monarch to maintain a permanent ambassador in every country with which he had diplomatic dealings. The Spanish diplomatic body was very similar to the French, the most complete at the time. It was the national ambassador to England who informed not only on English affairs, but also about their smaller neighbours: Scotland and Ireland. If in France Mos de Pinart was in charge of the English, Irish and Scottish issues,¹⁰ Mendoza did

⁷ HBLL, Philip II to Diego de Orellana de Chaves, 5 Feb. 1593, Vault MS 504-30205. See app. v.

⁸ HBLL, Philip II to Diego de Orellana de Chaves, 1 May 1593, Vault MS 504-30501. See app. vi.

⁹ HBLL, Philip II to Diego de Orellana de Chaves, 22 May 1593, Vault MS 504-30522. See app. vii.

¹⁰ See BL, 'Relación de como cosan sus officios los secretarios del Rey de Francia,' Add. MS 28,701.

the same for Spain for most of the period of study. Mendoza sent dispatches to Philip II once a week, in which he reported all what was of interest since his last dispatch. Generally, he divided the information into geographical areas, sending a separate letter for each one: until 1584, two or three for English affairs, one for French, one for Portuguese, one for Scottish, and not always, half a letter for Irish affairs. After 1584, Mendoza, as Spanish ambassador in Paris, wrote two or three letters on French affairs and only one on English. However, his attention to Scottish affairs did not change during the complete period of study.

Undoubtedly, the AGS holds the majority of Mendoza's correspondence in the collections E Legs. 818, 833-8 and 863 and K Leg. 1564. Only a few of his dispatches, those seized and deciphered by English agents, can be found in the BL, Add. MSS 28,420 and 28,027. Moreover, De Lamar Jensen, in the appendixes of his *Diplomacy and Dogmatism* (Cambridge, 1964), sheds some light on how to decipher Mendoza's secret correspondence.¹¹

Juan Vargas Mejia held the Spanish embassy in Paris at the beginning of our period of study, but he died in July 1580. He was replaced in April 1581 by the Netherlander Juan Bautista de Tassis, who held the appointment until 1584, when the French embassy was given to Mendoza. Obviously, Mejia and Tassis focused their weekly dispatches on French affairs, which took usually two or three pages, and devoted only one page to other affairs, including Scotland. In fact, the Guises' interest in Scotland was what had captured their attention. Neither Mejia nor Tassis ever had such close relations with Mary Stewart as Mendoza did. Nevertheless, they were contacted by the Scottish Catholics on several occasions in the period 1580-4, usually to forward petitions of men and money to the Spanish monarch; both ambassadors enclosed these in their dispatches.

¹¹ Almost as valuable as these manuscript sources are Mendoza's own works, which do not specifically mention Scotland, but offer a clear vision of the Spanish ambassador's ideas on war and politics. See for example *Theorica y Práctica de Guerra* (Madrid, 1595); see also G. Tejón, 'The Embassy of Bernardino de Mendoza to England, 1578-1584' (Oxford University B.Litt. thesis, 1932), pp. 81-111.

It is clear from their dispatches that, while Vargas Mejia still believed that the ‘English problem’ could be solved by diplomatic means, Tassis believed that an open war against England, through Ireland or Scotland, was needed to reassert the Spanish dominant presence in European politics. Quite obviously, this divergence of opinion was mainly caused by the different situations during their appointments; it should be remembered that the Spanish offensive policy was renewed at the beginning of 1580, merely a few months before Vargas’s death. Vargas Mejia’s letters to Philip II were recorded in AGS, K Leg. 447, and Tassis’s letters in E Leg. 836.

Moreover, Philip opted for the use of native agents who had personally visited in the court in Madrid. Nevertheless, it was not always clear what the character was of the intelligence agents on the Spanish payroll. How hard it is to make this distinction between intelligencer, agent, special envoy, and informer will appear in the case of Colonel William Sempill (1546-1633).

William Sempill, a Scottish mercenary in the Netherlands, in November 1582 became an adviser on Scottish matters for the Spanish monarch; a duty that he held until his death in 1633, years after it was required.¹² It is not surprising that he believed in a military action against Scotland as a means to secure England.

Surprisingly, a collection of letters and papers belonging to Colonel William Sempill is kept under the section of ‘Colleges Abroad’ in the Scottish Catholic Archives at Columba House, Edinburgh. These documents, covering his Spanish career (1582-1637), relate not only to his foundation of the Scots College in Madrid/Valladolid,¹³ but to his political and diplomatic life in the reigns of three generations of Spanish monarchs: Philip II, Philip III and Philip IV. Strictly, only the collection CA4/1 ‘Political documents of Colonel Semple,’ 1554-1601, corresponds to the period of study; however, on many occasions Colonel Sempill would refer in his memorandums for Philip III and IV to past events during Philip II’s reign. Thus, CA4/2 ‘Political: Colonel William Semple,’ 1602-1615; CA4/3, 1616-1622; CA4/4,

¹² M. Fernández de Navarrete, *Biblioteca Marítima Española, obra póstuma*, i (Madrid, 1851), pp. 606-9.

¹³ M. Taylor, *The Scots College in Spain* (Valladolid, 1971); see also Rev. W. McGoldrick, ‘The Scots College, Madrid,’ *IR*, iv (1953), pp. 92-103.

1623-1627; CA4/5, 1628-1630; and CA4/12, 1630-1633. Again, some of his letters were seized by English agents, and are held by the BL, Add. MS 28,420 accompanying those of other Spanish intelligencers.

In fact, stripped of its blatant religious propaganda, Sempill's accounts of the events in Scotland and memoranda for Philip II, Cardinal Granvelle, the duke of Alba, and Mendoza were reasonably accurate. His letters from his contacts are therefore of the greatest interest. Sempill's later career is further illuminated in the still unpublished book by David Worthington based on his Ph.D. thesis 'Scottish Clients of the Habsburgs, 1618 to 1648' (University of Aberdeen, Ph.D. thesis, 2001), which I was generously allowed to use in preparation for this Ph.D. thesis. However, still no monographic study has been dedicated to the life and work of this intricate personage.

Sempill, Mendoza and Tassis obtained their information on Scottish affairs from two sources: religious missionaries working in the realm, or the irregular reports of spies and pensioners. In many cases, it is debatable as to whether these missionaries financed by Spain were not in fact spies. Nevertheless, unpublished originals of their letters are found among William Sempill's papers in SCA, CA4 or accompanying Mendoza's dispatches to Philip II kept in AGS, E Legs. 818, 833-8 and 863. Very often their reports have printed versions in works such as Rev. William Forbes-Leith's *Narratives of Scottish Catholics* (London, 1889).

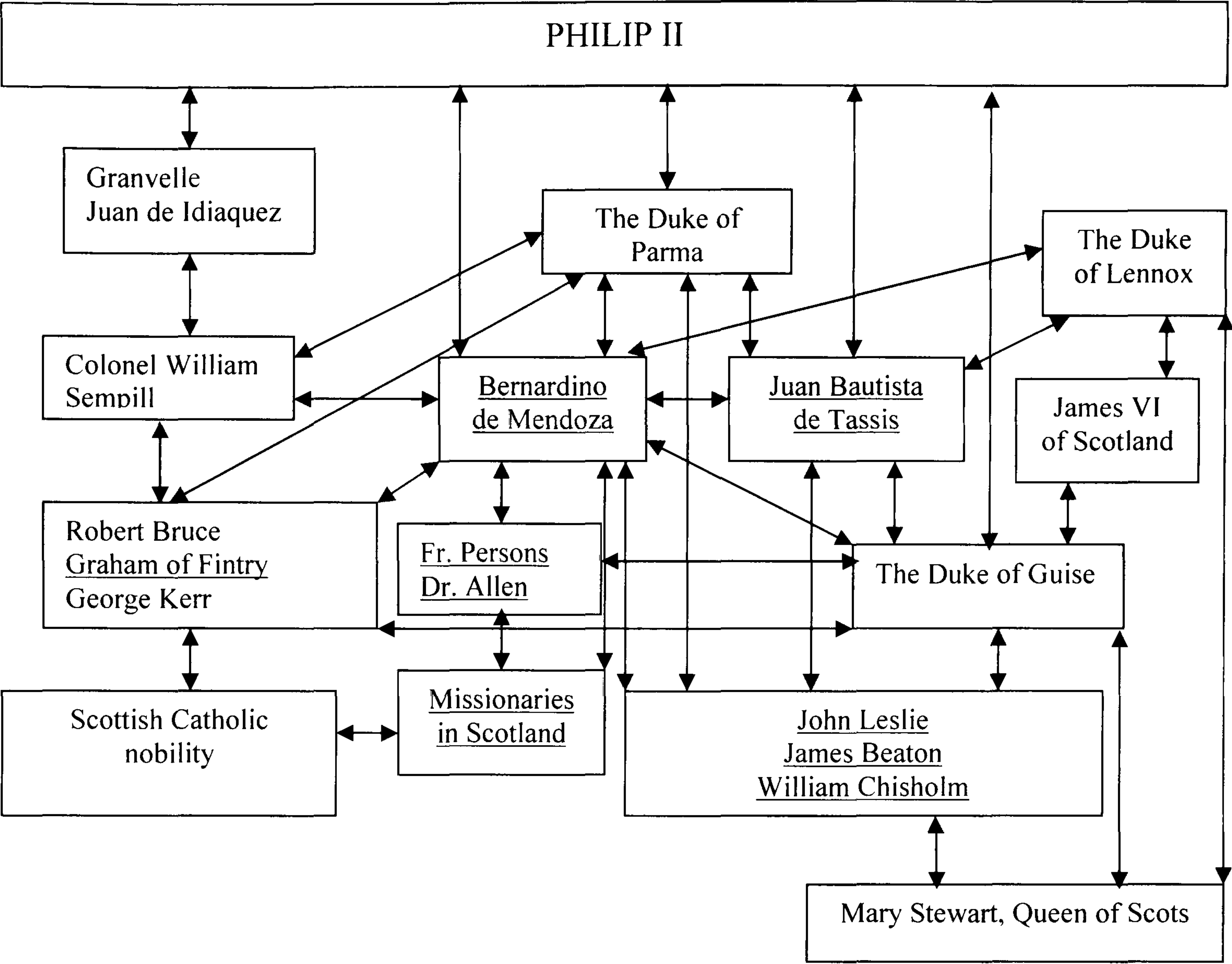
An admirable study has shed new light on one of the most famous, or infamous, personages involved in the intricate net of Spanish espionage: Robert Bruce's biography by T.G. Law.¹⁴ Bruce was in fact just a bearer of correspondence between the Scottish Catholic nobility and the dissidents led by the earls of Huntly, Errol and Angus on the one hand, and Colonel William Sempill on the other; but he was involved in some of the most important plots of the time, such as the 'Spanish Blanks.'¹⁵ However, in some urgent cases, as occurred just after the failure of the

¹⁴ T.G. Law, 'Robert Bruce, Conspirator and Spy,' in H. Brown (ed.), *Collected Essays and Reviews* (Edinburgh, 1904).

¹⁵ SCA, 'Colonel Sempill: representacion of Scottish affairs,' 15 Mar. 1630, CA4/5/16.

Armada, he wrote directly to the duke of Parma. In the majority of the cases, due to the importance of the events discussed, his letters, which are kept in the AGS and PRO, were printed in the *Calendars Spain and Scotland*. A brief but perceptive consideration of George Kerr's career as bearer and spy is provided by Peter Shearman in his publications in the *Innes Review*: 'Father Crichton and The Spanish Blanks,' *IR*, miscellany, iv (1953), p. 60 and 'The Spanish Blanks,' *IR*, iii (1952), pp. 81-104. Still, no specialised work has been done on David Graham of Fintry. Nevertheless, the original letters transported or written in some cases by these three intelligencers can be found in any of the main libraries of the Spanish centres of power, but in the majority of the cases in the AGS, accompanying those of the Spanish ambassadors. Again, those seized by English agents are kept in the BL and PRO. Moreover, there are some copies among Colonel Sempill's papers in SCA, CA4.

The intelligence which reached Philip had to travel by circuitous routes and might often undergo alterations in the process. As a result, a completely objective account, however desirable in theory, is difficult to achieve. Thus, the following diagram is no more than a sketch of the Spanish apparatus used to obtain information on Scotland. Nevertheless, it should be borne in mind that, although only regular or semi-regular communications have been taken into account in the creation of this diagram, there were also many sporadic contacts.



INTRODUCTION

Who can think of the sixteenth century without thinking of Philip II as one of the central figures from whom all contemporary persons, events, and circumstances stem? His characteristic virtues and defects, his sympathies and antipathies, his very whims and caprices are written large across the political history of Spain, Europe and the World. It is his figure that has made the sixteenth century the period of Spanish annals that has commanded the attention of the world. For over four centuries, historians, poets, and romancers of every country have tried to paint, study, analyse, explain and obviously, understand, his character and his fortunes as man and king. Nowadays, Philip II still remains one of the most controversial characters in history, admired and reviled in equal measure. In strictest truth, it may be said that Philip II's rule was the most momentous period in the history of Spain.

Philip II's contribution to the shaping of modern Europe has been subject of scholarly debate throughout the twentieth century. Helli Koenigsberger, John Elliott, James Amelang, Peter Bakewell, Charles J. Jago, Antonio Feros, Linda Martz, Xavier Gill, Jonathan Israel, Josep M. Fradera, James Casey Richard L. Kagan, Mía Rodríguez-Salgado, Patrick Williams, Geoffrey Parker and Henry Kamen, among many others in a large list of those who have being captivated by the charismatic Spanish sovereign.¹ However, only a few historians have widened their geographical scope and included Scotland in passing in their works on relations between England and Spain during Philip II's rule – for example, Carlos Gómez-Centurión who touched on commercial and religious contacts in the later sixteenth century; the work of Geoffrey Parker and José Alcala-Zamora on the army of Flanders; and Albert Loomie's study of the English exiles. Otherwise, no serious research has specifically examined Hispano-Scottish relations in the late sixteenth century, except for J.R. Elder's old general study on *Spanish Influences in Scottish History* (Glasgow 1920), which intelligently covers the period 1488-1603 and does not deserve the neglect which seems to have overshadowed it.

¹ See also M. Fernández Álvarez, *Tres Embajadores de Felipe II en Inglaterra* (Madrid, 1951), pp. 8-18; H. Lapeyre, 'L'Espagne Impériale et les Historiens Britanniques,' *Revue Belge de Philologie et d'Histoire*, ccxxxiii (1965), pp. 313-22.

The present work does not challenge comparison with their work, but I hope that it will be judged mainly as a contribution to our understanding of an important and neglected part of Philip II's foreign policy: Scotland, which as a case-study, can add light and shade to the picture of the 'Most Potent Monarch of the Christendome.'²

The arrangement of this study cannot be decided simply on a chronological principle; no historian could hope to carry forward a narrative of fact from year to year without condemning the readers to confusion. Moreover, a strict adherence to chronology would make it impossible to treat any one subject consecutively and intelligibly. On the other hand, the substitution of a topical for a chronological treatment, although in principle might simplify the issues, would have the effect of sacrificing unity, and would leave this work in the form of a series of essays, more or less disjointed, which is equally to be deprecated. As a working compromise between these two opposite methods, I have adopted the plan of arranging the chapters in rough chronological sequence, and at the same time keeping each chapter focused on the particular topic with which it deals. Subsequently, the four chapters which compose the body of the thesis are designed to offer the actual facts of Philip II's policy in Scotland, during the period 1580-1598. These chapters will have achieved my aim if they convey to the reader the importance of the Spanish-Scottish relations, through a full account of the political, diplomatic and religious relations between Spain and Scotland in the last two decades of the sixteenth century.

With this in mind, the reader may find it possible to dismiss the preconceptions which have for so long impeded the study of Spanish-Scottish relations in the early modern period, and to read about the activities, and often the words of those, whose opinions and actions transformed the politics of Western Europe. However, in studying any period in history the first question we naturally ask is: what were the historical conditions and precedents to the period of study?

The last two decades of the XVI century were the climax of a period of direct and continuous Spanish involvement in Scottish affairs, which had begun in the early 1560s. By the time of Philip II's accession to the Spanish throne in 1556, the Spanish

² G. Parker, *Philip II* (Illinois, 1996), p. 159.

monarchy was already firmly committed to a pan-European political strategy.³ Philip II believed in a united Christendom, a *Universitas Christiana*, and it was no secret that, by associating himself so completely with the Counter-Reformation, he was becoming involved in the political affairs of most of the states of Europe. Thus, the Spanish monarch was called upon by Catholics everywhere to support their activities and organisations.⁴

In July 1554, Philip married his second cousin, Mary Tudor, queen of England. Subsequently, Philip became 'king consort'. On 17 November 1558, Mary died and Henry VIII's other daughter, Elizabeth, a Protestant, became queen of England. Even though Philip's authority and powers in England lapsed automatically with Mary's death, he still hoped to keep his late kingdom within the Habsburg orbit.⁵

Even before Mary's death, the possibility of a marriage to Elizabeth was debated in the English and Spanish courts, but Elizabeth quickly rejected the idea.⁶ By the end of 1558, Philip had accepted, however reluctantly, that Elizabeth was queen of England and that she would be a Protestant monarch.⁷ But in the face of the continuous English attacks against the Indies fleet and their aid to the rebellion in Flanders, it was no longer safe for Philip to keep a vigilant peace with England.⁸ However, at this time, Pope Pius IV was still hesitant concerning the 'English problem' and his policy encouraged Philip to try to restore England to Catholicism through diplomacy.⁹

Scotland's strategic position as England's Achilles' heel, and the religious struggle within the realm was likely to lead to interference by the European Catholic powers. However, the possibility to gain control over England through the Stewart succession to the English throne, and thus, balance in the international scene, was even more

³ R.A. Stradling, *Europe and the Decline of Spain. A study of the Spanish system, 1580-1720* (London, 1981), p. 26.

⁴ T. Clancy, *Papist Pamphleteers, the Allen-Persons party and the political thought of the Counter-Reformation in England, 1572-1615* (Chicago, 1964).

⁵ C. Martin & G. Parker, *The Spanish Armada* (Manchester, 1999), p. 59.

⁶ Kamen, *Philip of Spain* (London, 1997), p. 72.

⁷ P. Williams, *Philip II* (Basingstoke, 2001), p. 110.

⁸ I.A.A. Thompson, *War and Government in Habsburg Spain, 1560-1620* (London, 1976), p. 29.

⁹ A. Dures, *English Catholicism 1558-1642: continuity and change* (Harlow, 1983), p. 11.

appealing for Spain and France.¹⁰ For the Catholic powers, Mary Stewart's rights to the throne of England were incontestable; moreover, they had never recognised the legitimacy of Elizabeth's succession to the crown of England.¹¹ Since Elizabeth was a heretic, in the eyes of the Catholic powers Mary was queen of England, as well as Scotland.¹²

On 5 December 1560, Francis of Valois, King of France and Mary Stewart's husband, died. Mary had not only lost her husband, but her status as queen of France. The change of monarch in France brought the Guises' influence into decline and completely destroyed the possibility that France and Scotland might be united under Mary, Queen of Scots.¹³ Charles, Francis's brother was the new king and Catherine de Medici pushed the Guises from their position. However, there was still a hope for the Guises to regain the control over the throne of France: Mary should marry the future King of Spain, and produce a child. The marriage of princes or princesses to foreign rulers in order to cement a bond between two royal houses was a common practice in the sixteenth century. However, it only became a real possibility when in 1562, Mary's marriage with don Carlos, the seventeen year old son of Philip II, was debated in the Spanish court.¹⁴ Don Carlos was Mary's sister-in-law's step-son, deformed and mentally imbalanced, but nevertheless, the heir to the Spanish Empire. By marrying his son and heir to Mary, thus, annexing Scotland to the Spanish lands, Philip had the ambition to bring the entire British Isles within the orbit of his power, and obviously, to restore the Catholic faith to them.¹⁵

Fearing the international reaction, the negotiations were being kept secret; but Cardinal d'Este informed his master, the duke of Ferrara:

As for the Queen of Scotland it is said that she decided all in exact accordance with her uncle [Henry of Lorraine, the duke of Guise]'s opinions, and it would seem that some negotiation with the son of the King of Spain [don Carlos] has been commenced, although I believe that these are mere words with little foundation. At present she is most fully occupied in bringing

¹⁰ D. Nobbs, *England and Scotland, 1560-1707* (London, 1952), pp. 50-1.

¹¹ M.A. Hearnshaw (ed.), *The Social & Political Ideas of some Great Thinkers of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (London, 1926), p. 15.

¹² J.D. Mackie, 'Scotland and the Spanish Armada,' *SHR*, xii (1915), p. 4.

¹³ Williams, *Philip II*, p. 110.

¹⁴ AGS, 'Proyectados casamientos de Maria Estuardo con el Principe Carlos, hijo de Felipe II, y con el Archiduque Carlos,' E Leg. 816.

¹⁵ Fernández Álvarez, *Tres Embajadores*, pp. 101-2.

the affairs of that kingdom to a settlement. She found religion so far ruined, that she and her court have only been allowed Mass in private.¹⁶

According to Antonia Fraser, the Spanish marriage was Mary and the duke of Guise's first choice.¹⁷ Obviously, for Guise to have his cousin close to the Spanish throne was very fruitful. In 1563, Mary sent Lethington to London, apparently to negotiate her succession to the English throne with Elizabeth, however, he had orders to negotiate her marriage to don Carlos with the bishop de Quadra, the Spanish ambassador in London.¹⁸

The consequences of the marriage were feared not only in England,¹⁹ but in France itself. If Mary married don Carlos, the Guises, having their niece so close to the Spanish throne, could change the balance of power in France. Subsequently, Catherine de Medici, Mary's mother-in-law, presented another royal bride to Philip II for his son, her own daughter Marguerite. Obviously, Philip viewed this alliance as far more favourable to him and accepted.²⁰

While Mary was losing her support in France, which was anxious to preserve its friendship with England,²¹ a new possibility of union to the archduke Charles of Austria, cousin of Philip II, appeared.²² But when in 1564 the rumours of a possible matrimony between Elizabeth and the archduke Charles emerged, a new candidate for Mary's hand appeared, the duke of Orleans.²³ By April 1565, Philip was informed by bishop Quadra of Mary's marriage to Lord Darnley;²⁴ thus, when in 1565 Mary wrote to Philip asking for his aid against the only 'common enemies of the Catholic

¹⁶ Cardinal d'Este [Hippolito, Cardinal de Ferrara] to the duke of Ferrara, from St. Germain, 3 Feb. 1561-2, printed in Pollen (ed.), *A Letter from Mary Queen of Scots to the Duke of Guise* (SHS, 1904), p. 63.

¹⁷ A. Fraser, *Mary Queen of Scots* (London, 1969), p. 114.

¹⁸ J. Elder, *Spanish Influences in Scottish History* (Glasgow, 1920), p. 50; see also J. Wormald, *Mary, Queen of Scots. Politics passion and a kingdom lost* (London, 2001), p. 136.

¹⁹ BL, Alvaro de Quadra, the bishop of Aguila, to Cardinal Granvelle, from London, 3 Jan. 1561-2, MS Add. 26,056; also printed in Pollen, *A Letter from Mary Queen of Scots*, pp. 64-5; the Spanish text is printed in Lettenhove, *Relations*, ii, p. 657.

²⁰ Fraser, *Mary Queen of Scots*, p. 116.

²¹ R.B. Wernham, *Before the Armada, the growth of English foreign policy, 1485-1588* (London, 1971), pp. 267-8.

²² AGS, 'Proyectados casamientos de Maria Estuardo con el Principe Carlos, hijo de Felipe II, y con el Archiduque Carlos,' E Leg. 816; see also S. Adams, 'The Release of Lord Darnley,' in M. Lynch (ed.), *Mary Stewart. Queen in three kingdoms* (Oxford, 1988), pp. 138-9.

²³ AGS, 'Rumores de matrimonio de la Reina Isabel con el Archiduque Carlos y de la reina de Escocia con el Duque de Orleáns,' E Leg. 817.

²⁴ Elder, *Influences*, p. 52.

Church,' Philip offered his support within Scotland.²⁵ Philip knew that Darnley wanted not only the throne of Scotland, but her rights to the crown of England.²⁶ The news of a possible marriage between Elizabeth and the King of France, which would cause a dangerous change in the balance of power in Europe, incited Philip to project a series of plans to help Mary to regain control of her throne and gain the crown of England.²⁷

Of course, Mary and Scotland were not Philip's priority now; the affairs of Flanders eclipsed everything else.²⁸ Moreover, the Spanish net of espionage and its ability to intervene were not strong enough for Philip to decide directly to influence Scottish politics. The precariousness of the Spanish intelligence system was clear when in 1566, Philip II was erroneously informed of Mary's death.²⁹ Mary's life was not in danger yet; but only a year later, the lords of the counsel of the nobility, in the scheme of the earl of Bothwell's intended marriage to Mary, resolved to seize her.³⁰ Mary chose to escape to England on 16 May 1568, after her defeat at Langside.³¹ Nevertheless, Elizabeth had sent her tokens of her affection, including a ring, which Mary should send back to her in case Mary sought shelter in England. That was one of her life's greatest mistakes: immediately after her arrival, Elizabeth decided to arrest her.³² She would spend the rest of her life, until her execution in 1587, confined in England.

Nevertheless, Philip II's first reaction to the news of her captivity in England was to order his ambassador in England, don Guerau de Spes, to avoid making contact with Mary.³³ Spes had recently replaced the Spanish ambassador Guzman de Silva in London.³⁴ Perhaps because of his inexperience, or because of his conspiratorial

²⁵ G. Parker, 'Felipe II y el Legado de Cristóbal Colón,' in R. Villari & G. Parker, *La Política de Felipe II. Dos estudios* (Valladolid, 1996), p. 64.

²⁶ Elder, *Influences*, p. 52; see also J. Goodare, 'Queen Mary's Catholic Interlude,' *IR*, xxxviii (1987), pp. 154-70.

²⁷ AGS, 'Auxilios a la Reina de Escocia para recuperar el trono,' E Leg. 818.

²⁸ Parker, *The Grand Strategy*, pp. 117-25.

²⁹ AGS, 'Negocios de Escocia y desconfianza de ambas reinas,' E Leg. 819.

³⁰ C. Nau (ed.), *The History of Mary Stewart, from the murder of Riccio until her flight into England* (Edinburgh, 1883), p. 39.

³¹ M. Wood, 'Before and After the Battle of Langside,' *SHR*, xxiii (1926), pp. 294-7.

³² *ibid.*, pp. 297-8.

³³ Parker, 'Felipe II' in Villari & Parker, *La Política de Felipe II*, p. 64.

³⁴ Parker, *The Grand Strategy*, p. 155; see also L.M. Santamarta Lozano, 'Don Guerau de Spes en la Corte Isabelina: la documentación diplomática y el conflicto anglo-español (1568-1571)' (Universidad

nature, Spes contravened these orders and maintained illicit correspondence with Mary and the Catholic dissidents of England and Scotland, who desired the overthrow of Elizabeth.³⁵ Geoffrey Parker confessed that in retrospect, it seemed that if Guzman de Silva had not been replaced, the cordial diplomatic relations could have been preserved.³⁶ It should be noted, that it was Spes who coined the term ‘the Enterprise of England,’ for his plan to liberate Mary and crown her queen of England.³⁷

Neither did Mary follow Philip II’s commands, and just after her imprisonment in England, she started to write to Philip.³⁸ The bearer was Father John Leslie, the bishop of Ross, a close collaborator and friend of the Scottish Queen. Her letters were monothematic: complaining of her deplorable situation in prison. Moreover, it was in the summer of 1568 onwards when Pope Pius V began to urge Philip II to invade England and depose Elizabeth in Mary’s favour.³⁹ This persuaded the Spanish monarch – along with consulting with experts of Mary’s rights to the English crown – to charge the duke of Alba with the task of devising a way to liberate the imprisoned Queen.⁴⁰ Philip II confessed to Alba:

No he tomado ninguna decisión o contestado a su carta autografiada, de la cual incluyo copia, hasta que me digas que opinas de sus asuntos y en que manera, y hasta que punto, puedo asistirle.⁴¹

Mary continued sending urgent pleas from her prison to Philip II;⁴² moreover, supplications came from Catholics in England, Scotland and Ireland,⁴³ who had converted the Queen of Scots to a martyr.⁴⁴ But what finally moved Philip to take

de Oviedo Ph.D. thesis, 2001).

³⁵ Parker, ‘Felipe II’ in Villari & Parker, *La Política de Felipe II*, p. 64.

³⁶ Parker, *The Grand Strategy*, p. 155.

³⁷ *ibid.*, p. 157.

³⁸ AGS, ‘Secretas Intelligencias entre Felipe II y la Reina de Escocia,’ E Leg. 820.

³⁹ Martin & Parker, *The Spanish Armada*, p. 62.

⁴⁰ AGS, ‘Cartas de Isabel de Inglaterra, Maria Estuardo y el Duque de Alba,’ E Leg. 821; Colonel Sempill wrote that the ‘matters of Scotland were for the first time charged to the duke of Alba in the year of 1573.’ However, this date was a mistake of the Colonel, who by the seventeenth century was in his 60s and that in 1570-3 was still not in the service of the King of Spain. SCA, ‘Razones por saver si escosia es deseando al Rey d’España,’ CA4/9/10.

⁴¹ ‘I have refrained from taking any decision or answering her autograph letter, of which I enclose a copy, until you tell me what you think of her business and in what way, and to what extent, I should assist her.’ *CSP Span.*, ii, p. 3

⁴² AGS, ‘Cartas de la reina de Escocia,’ E Leg. 822; AGS, ‘Avisos de Escocia,’ E Legs. 825-6; these letters for Philip II, as well as a ‘book of gold’ for the duchess of Feria, were carried by George Fizwilliam. J. Durkan, ‘The Library of Mary, Queen of Scots,’ in Lynch (ed.), *Mary Stewart*, p. 90.

⁴³ AGS, ‘Socorros que pedian a Felipe II los catolicos de Inglaterra, Escocia e Irlanda,’ E Legs. 823-4.

⁴⁴ This situation was described in SCA, William Sempill to the duke of Alba, 13 Feb. 1570, CA4/1/2.

action against England was the provocations of the English pirates and the seizure of Alba's treasure ships, in period 1569-1570.⁴⁵

Finally in 1570, Philip II decided to send massive assistance to the conspiracy organized by the adventurer Robert Ridolfi, which was to place Mary Stewart on the English throne.⁴⁶ Ridolfi was a Florentine banker resident in London who had sporadic contacts with the Pope, the duke of Norfolk, don Bernardino de Mendoza – the Spanish ambassador to England – and John Leslie – the bishop of Ross and one of Mary's representatives in the continent.⁴⁷ The plan involved the landing of a Spanish army of ten thousand men from the Netherlands commanded by Alba at the same time as a revolt by Norfolk and the English Catholics.⁴⁸ Once free, Mary would marry Norfolk and replace Elizabeth on the English throne.⁴⁹

In July 1570, the Spanish Council of State agreed unanimously that Philip had the divine mission to convert England back to Catholicism.⁵⁰ Moreover, the plan obtained the blessing of the Pope, who had for some time been pressing Philip about the 'English problem.'⁵¹ Thus, Ridolfi handled some payments from the Pope and Alba to English conspirators, and also made advances on his own credit.⁵²

The Spanish invasion was never accomplished because in September 1571 the chief plotters were arrested. William Cecil had assured Walsingham that Mary had plans to escape to Spain, where she would make James VI marry Philip's daughter; and how Mary wanted to provoke a new rebellion in England with Philip's complicity.⁵³ During her examination, Mary confessed that she was going to be liberated from her

⁴⁵ J. Lynch, *Spain under the Habsburgs*, i (Oxford, 1965), pp. 264-5.

⁴⁶ G. Parker, 'The Place of Tudor England in the Messianic Vision of Philip II of Spain,' *RHS*, 6th series, xii (2002), pp. 203-19; F. Edwards, *Dangerous Queen. The story of Mary, Queen of Scots and the Ridolfi plot* (London, 1964).

⁴⁷ P.J. Holmes, 'Mary Stewart in England,' in Lynch, *Mary Stewart*, p. 203; see also P.J. Holmes, *Resistance and Compromise. The political thought of the Elizabethan Catholics* (Cambridge, 1982).

⁴⁸ AGS, 'Socorros que pedian a Felipe II los catolicos de Inglaterra, Escocia e Irlanda,' E Legs. 823-4; about the rather difficult issue of the English Catholicism see T.M. Caughron, 'Elizabethan Catholicism: the dilemma of split allegiance' (Claremont Graduate School Ph.D. thesis, 1981).

⁴⁹ G. Donaldson, *The First Trial of Mary Queen of Scots* (London, 1969), p. 219.

⁵⁰ Parker, *Philip II*, p. 118.

⁵¹ Lynch, *Spain under the Habsburgs*, i, pp. 264-5.

⁵² Holmes, 'Mary Stewart in England,' in Lynch, *Mary Stewart*, p. 203; see also B.I. Rapple, 'The Political Thought of Military Men in the Reign of Elizabeth I to 1588' (Cambridge University Ph.D. thesis, 2001), p. 51.

⁵³ Parker, 'Felipe II' in Villari & Parker, *La Política de Felipe II*, pp. 64-5.

prison by English sympathisers and taken to the coast, where she would embark towards Spain. Mary declared that, once in Spain, she would marry Philip II's illegitimate half-brother – don Juan de Austria – and her son, James, would marry Philip's daughter – the *Infanta* Isabella.⁵⁴ Norfolk was executed and Mary placed in custody.⁵⁵ In fact, rumours of this plan had already reached Scotland by May 1570.⁵⁶

P.J. Holmes correctly affirmed that the 'Ridolfi plot' cracked the Scottish 'auld alliance' with France.⁵⁷ But it was not until 1573 that the pro-Marian nobility decided to send a messenger to Spain. This bearer was George, 5th Lord Seton, who went to Flanders,⁵⁸ sent by the Scottish Catholic nobility and Mary Stewart. He carried the commission to ask Alba to levy an army of Catholics against England to liberate Mary, transport James to Spain and impose Catholicism on the Isle. However, the duke knew that this still was an impossible task to carry out and remitted him to Spain. Lord Seton, to avoid going himself, sent his son, John Seton,⁵⁹ hoping that Philip would grant his son a diplomatic position.⁶⁰ When John arrived at Madrid, the Spanish monarch appointed him as *gentil hombre de la boca de su Majestad*⁶¹ and was sent back to Scotland. Philip wanted to please them; just enough to allow him to be well informed on the Scottish affairs. Thus, the correspondence between Philip II and the Scottish Catholic nobility was established.⁶²

⁵⁴ Paker, *The Grand Strategy*, p. 161.

⁵⁵ Parker, *Philip II*, p. 118; J. Emerson, *Images of a Queen. Mary Stuart in sixteenth-century literature* (Berkeley, 1964), pp. 54, 56.

⁵⁶ Atholl to Glenorchy, from Dunkeld, 20 May 1570. *Campbell Letters*, p. 148.

⁵⁷ Holmes, 'Mary Stewart in England' in Lynch (ed.), *Mary Stewart*, p. 211; nevertheless, the debate about when the Scottish 'auld alliance' with France was broken is still open. R.A. Mason wrote: 'by the end of her [Mary Stewart's] personal rule, her Scottish subjects had effectively rejected the auld alliance with France.' R.A. Mason 'Imagining Scotland: Scottish political thought and the problem of Britain, 1560-1650,' in id. (ed.), *Scots and Britons. Scottish political thought and the union of 1603* (Cambridge, 1994), p. 7; Elizabeth Bonner claimed that the 'auld alliance' was definitively broken in 1560. E. Bonner, 'The *Politique* of Henri II: *de facto* French rule in Scotland, 1550-1554,' *Journal of the Sydney Society for Scottish History*, vii (1999), p. 107.

⁵⁸ It has been assumed that Spain and some Scottish Lords, including George, Lord Seton, may have planned to rescue Mary Queen of Scots and enthrone her as Queen of England at the battle of Langside. After their defeat, the Setons went in exile in Flanders. *Scots Peerage*, iii, p. 369.

⁵⁹ The Scots Peerage only mentions Alexander Seton, earl of Dunfermline, as son of George Lord Seton. However, it is quite probable that John was a younger brother or Alexander. For John and other children of Lord Seton see *ibid.*, viii, pp. 588-9.

⁶⁰ SCA, 'Clase de papeles del Coronel Semple,' 15 Oct. 1620, CA4/3/13.

⁶¹ 'Master of the Household.' See G. Seton (ed.), *Memoir of Alexander Seton, Earl of Dunfermline* (Edinburgh, 1882), p. 18.

⁶² SCA, 'Razones por saber si escosia es deseando al Rey d'España,' CA4/9/10; SCA, 'Clase de papeles del Coronel Semple,' 15 Oct. 1620, CA4/3/13.

Elizabeth's discovery of this correspondence and plots made communication impossible until 1574, when Mary was able to send a commission with Lord Hamilton. In her letters, which had been written by John Leslie in the name of the Queen of Scots, she offered Philip II to transport her son to Spain to be educated in the Catholic faith in exchange of protection of her rights to the English throne.⁶³ Mary seemed very likely to die in captivity, thus, her son was the obvious heir to the dual crown.⁶⁴ Subsequently, a struggle for the control of the young king of Scotland developed between Philip and Elizabeth, as early as 1575; he was just eleven years old. Philip was informed of 'the new machinations of Elizabeth to take possession of Mary and James and to protect the rebellion in Flanders.'⁶⁵ In the last years of the 1570s there were continuous reports to Philip of Elizabeth's plans to take possession of James, the displeasure of the young king for the English, and his decision to take over the government of his kingdom.⁶⁶ Thus, in the autumn of 1578, Philip wrote to Mendoza asking him to keep a close eye on the Scottish affairs.⁶⁷

Although, Spain had achieved a partial pacification of the Low Countries by the summer of 1579, there was a direct and continuous English involvement in the revolts. Moreover, Elizabeth was negotiating her marriage with the duke of Alençon, brother to the King of France and the future duke of Anjou.⁶⁸ It was no longer safe for Spain to maintain a vigilant peace with England and in 1580, Philip II's accension to the Portuguese throne, vacant since 1578, gave the Spaniards new strength. Evidently, the difficulties involved in a direct attack on England were many, as we shall see, indirect ways had to be found, and Scotland and Ireland seemed the ideal choices.

The small realm of Scotland had been drawn into a great struggle between Catholicism and Protestantism. Obviously, Protestantism within the kingdom was supported by England, while the Catholics found that France, their traditional supporter, was being struck by quite similar religious divisions. In France, the Huguenots turned their eyes to Elizabeth of England and the Prince of Orange to get the necessary aid to resist their enemies. The chiefs of the Catholic cause, Guise and

⁶³ AGS, 'Cartas de Escocia,' E Leg. 828.

⁶⁴ Mackie, 'Scotland and the Spanish Armada,' p. 4.

⁶⁵ AGS, 'Nuevas maquinaciones de Isabel I,' E Leg. 829.

⁶⁶ AGS, 'Estado de Escocia y de sus Reyes,' E Legs. 830-2.

⁶⁷ *CSP Span.*, ii, p. 615.

his people looked definitively to Philip II, the champion of the Pope, for support. It was clear when, at the beginning of 1579, James Beaton – the old archbishop of Glasgow and Mary’s representative in France – addressed Philip with his belief that with 4,000 soldiers paid for three or four months it would be suitable to liberate Mary and re-impose Catholicism upon the Isle.⁶⁹ The Jesuit Father Englefield went to Spain to persuade Philip II of the advantage of this ‘enterprise.’⁷⁰

However, this proposal was rejected a month later on the advice of Mendoza.⁷¹ But it was evident that the Scottish pro-Catholics saw Spain as the most likely foreign source of money and men, while the Spaniards were now more than ever prepared to study the possibilities of an indirect intervention in Scotland. Philip II had a worldwide empire where the sun never set, which thanks to the English, was proving more difficult to hold and defend than it was to conquer. Subsequently, by collaborating with Scotland, Spain would be able to destroy one of the main sources of funding for the rebels in the Low Countries; the attacks of Drake and Howard on the Spanish settlements and fleet of America would cease.⁷² Moreover, after the reissue of Pius V’s bull against Elizabeth by Gregory XIII,⁷³ it was clear that the Spanish intervention in Scotland had the consent and support of the Pope. Philip wrote ‘they [Mary, Queen of Scots, and James VI] find in all my correspondence, assistance and good friendship, and also I got it for them from His Holiness, is believed that he will help the King, at least with money if he shows hope of being Catholic.’⁷⁴ However, many princes and kings – Catholic and Protestant – even the Pope, feared the Spanish domination of Europe, through the annexation of new kingdoms. Thus, when on 23 February 1579, Philip signed a league in Rome with the Pope and the duke of Florence against Elizabeth, he had to agree:

⁶⁸ Donaldson, *All the Queen’s men*, pp. 143-4.

⁶⁹ AGS, Secretary Zayas to Mendoza, 8 Jan. 1579, E Leg. 832, fo. 46; *CODOIN*, xci, pp. 305-7.

⁷⁰ A.J. Loomie, *The Spanish Elizabethans* (London, 1963), p. 24.

⁷¹ AGS, Mendoza to Secretary Zayas, 8 Feb. 1579, E Leg. 832, fo. 144; *CODOIN*, xci, pp. 336-40.

⁷² For a complete and detailed list of these events see BL, ‘Epigram thereon of the Armada,’ Cott. MS Tit. B viii, fo. 336.

⁷³ NLS, ‘Clausule sententie declaratione contra Elisabethan Angliae Reninam una aim literis Pauli V, dem esset cardinalis, ac sanctissimum Clementen VIII,’ ADV MS 31.4.15, fo. 89; this situation was well described by J.H. Burns, ‘The Political Background of the Reformation, 1513-1625,’ *IR*, x (1959), p. 225.

⁷⁴ AGS, Philip II to Mendoza, from Lisbon, without date, E Leg. 835, fos. 29-30; *CODOIN*, xci, pp. 569-71.

That the K[ing] of Spayne shall not pretend any thing otherwise then to make league...and that the K[ing] of Scotte shalbe let at liberty and be preserved in his owne kingdome.⁷⁵

The growing political tension in Europe in the early 1580s again brought Mary Queen of Scots to the centre of domestic and European politics. However, the situation in Ireland also had to be carefully watched for much of the same period; a widespread rebellion there would provide Philip II with the opportunity he had long sought, of converting Ireland in a 'Catholic Holland' on England's flank. Although Philip's contacts with Irish dissidents dated from the 1570s, the danger from this source reached a climax only in 1596, when the earl of Tyrone entered into military relations with Spain. However, it should be borne in mind that on many occasions the Spaniards, including Philip himself, did not distinguish between the Scots of Argyll and the Western Isles and the Irish, as was the case of the Macdonnells. Subsequently, the Spanish reports very often would refer to them as 'Gaelics,' which illustrates the difficulty of deciding whether they were Scots or Irish.⁷⁶

Scotland became one of Philip II's priorities in his foreign policy in the 1580s largely because of its strategic position in the British Isles and the North Sea.⁷⁷ Thus far, we have been tracing the course of events with only brief glances at their domestic repercussions up to 1580; but to consider these alone would give a misleading impression of Spanish-Scottish relations in general. Certainly, a number of points should be borne in mind regarding the forces that influenced relations between Spain and Scotland.

Mary, Queen of Scots, was an important influence in the development of Spanish interest in Scotland, since she was by now intent on actively persuading her Guise relatives and the Spaniards to use Scotland as springboard for a Spanish invasion of England and the rescue of the young James VI from Protestant influence. Mary's correspondence and papers reveal both the preponderance of her Scottish interests and her close contacts with Spain. There is much less concern with English affairs, except in so far as they might affect her release.⁷⁸

⁷⁵ BL, the duke of Parma to Elizabeth I, 9 Nov. 1587, Add. MS 48,126, fos. 107-8b.

⁷⁶ E. García Hernán, *Irlanda y el Rey Prudente* (Madrid, 2000), pp. 1, 5, 111, 123.

⁷⁷ AGS, Philip II to don Juan de Vargas Mejia, 1580, E Leg. 833, fo. 43.

⁷⁸ Lynch, *Mary Stewart*, p. 197.

In fact, the presence of Mary in England changed the very nature of Spanish politics. Philip agonised over the dilemmas created for him by Mary's imprisonment. Mary was a Catholic held prisoner by a Protestant, something that Philip as champion of the Catholic Church could not afford to permit.⁷⁹ Yet Mary's attempt to involve Spain in Scottish political life was closely related to two other issues: French and English affairs. It threatened to break the 'auld alliance' as well as to break faith with England. Of course, Mary did much to provoke the slow but inexorable breakdown of Spain's relations with England. It is clear, however, that even if Mary had not been in England, relations between Elizabeth and Philip II would have worsened, with the affairs of the Netherlands being the main factor in this deterioration.⁸⁰

In 1580, Scotland was drowning in a sea of instability. The Scottish nobles were in a position which, for good or ill, was fraught with momentous issues for the future of the kingdom. Mary Stewart seemed very likely to die in captivity in England, and her son, James was by now the obvious heir to the crowns of England, Ireland and Scotland.⁸¹ Yet the task of controlling the forces in Scottish political life might well have been too much even for a skilful and determined statesman, James was only fourteen years of age and faced a complex task: to govern an intractable realm. The influence of the nobles was not only decisive in political struggles, but had also become conspicuous within religious affairs. After the Reformation, parts of the nobility shifted religious opinions, which profoundly affected their position, aims, and methods of action. Soon after the overthrow of the regent Morton – the leader of the pro-English faction⁸² – King James's distant French kinsman, Esmé Stewart, the Seieur d'Aubigny, arrived in Scotland. By 1580, Esmé, a former Catholic who supposedly had converted to Protestantism, had become the first of James's favourites. It was his presence among those who directly influenced the young James VI and subsequently, among those who controlled Scottish policy and affairs, that raised hopes in the Catholic faction.⁸³

⁷⁹ Williams, *Philip II*, pp. 111, 125.

⁸⁰ *ibid.*, p. 204.

⁸¹ Mackie, 'Scotland and the Spanish Armada,' p. 4; see also J.M. Brown, 'Scottish Politics 1567-1625,' in A.G.R. Smith (ed.), *The Reign of James VI and I* (London, 1981), p. 24.

⁸² G.R. Hewitt, *Scotland under Morton, 1572-80* (Edinburgh, 1982), p. 181.

⁸³ Queen Elizabeth gave instructions to Captain Errington to: 'inform himself what alterations in the State are either presently wrought or in working by the practice of d'Aubigny.' *CSP Scot.*, v, pp. 380-1; E. Linklater, *The Survival of Scotland. A review of Scottish history from roman times to the present day* (London, 1968), p. 238.

Neither James's Protestant education nor his Catholic mother were sufficiently powerful in themselves to sway either his Protestant nor the Catholic nobles staidly in its favour. The choice between rival policies was complicated by the choice between rival religions. A latent pattern in Scottish politics now began to declare itself: the Protestants were on the whole committed to the English alliance, while the Catholics were from time to time associated with Spain. On many occasions, English agents had regretted that James seemed not to have the power to restrain his noblemen, nor himself, from dealing with foreign powers.⁸⁴

For no country was this new attitude of the ruling forces of Scotland more important than Spain. Philip II was becoming increasingly involved in the political affairs of Scotland, being petitioned by both Catholics and dissidents in the realm to support their activities and organizations. Despite Scotland's apparent remoteness, tucked away in the north-west corner of the British Isles, curiously, it was her strategic geographic position as a natural stepping-stone to England that gave her significance, an opportunity that Spain did not dare to miss. Through the persuasive power of an opinion often repeated we have become accustomed to the idea that Philip II was dominated by his religiosity. It could be affirmed that the Spanish monarch, obsessively devoted to his faith, was tremendously concerned with carrying back Catholicism to the British Isles; however, it may also be said that as much as the agonies of the heretics would have delighted him, Philip also knew that instability inside the Isle, could mean the end of English aid to the rebels in the Netherlands and a cessation of the English piracy and privateering of the Spanish Atlantic fleet. Moreover, Scotland could be used as a secure base in the North Sea. On all these grounds, Philip II's concern with Scotland was understandable, and, from his point of view, justifiable. Indeed, religion was primordial, but there were other forces at work, subtler if less obvious, which made these affairs infinitely more complicated.

It might have been expected that the Spanish intervention in Scotland would have led to a Spanish domination of the realm; however, in Scotland there was in reality little need to fear a Spanish attack. Firstly, Spain's interest in Scotland depended on its

⁸⁴ *CSP Scot.*, v, pp. 225, 266, 414.

relations with England, in the same way that its ability to assist them was always conditioned by her constraining commitments in the Low Countries and France. Secondly, the Scots knew that Spain saw them as retainers and always looked for their collaboration in case of an invasion of England, rather than a conquest of Scotland itself. If fortune had smiled on the Spanish, as they had hoped it would, they might later have succeeded in increasing their own military and political power. The full consequences of that would have been incalculable; but certainly it would not have meant total control of the Isle by the Scots themselves. This was certainly a very curious situation: it was clear that their collaboration was needed for any attempt to invade the Isle, but the Spanish monarch did certainly not have a good opinion of the Scots.⁸⁵ Mendoza had informed Philip II of the ‘natural inconstancy’ of the Scots and further commented that they ‘being needy, will be content with little.’⁸⁶ Moreover, the continuous requests of financial support by Scots,⁸⁷ confirmed Philip in his belief that they could be easily bought. Subsequently, Spain implemented a policy of pensions in Scotland.⁸⁸

At this period, the nobility travelled to the continent to serve in foreign armies, and courts, where they had envied the richness of the courts and of their beneficiaries.⁸⁹ It must be remembered that John Seton, the first of the Scots leaving the realm for the Spanish Court, was warmly welcomed by Philip who appointed him as *gentil hombre de la boca de su Majestad*⁹⁰ and also granted him a pension of 2,000 crowns.⁹¹ Subsequently, the question of the Scottish nobility’s motives emerges. Were these nobles as a body mainly influenced by the desire to recover or increase their power⁹² and wealth, or were they sincerely convinced that collaboration with Spain was a

⁸⁵ Philip II warned to Mendoza: ‘in spite of his apparent zeal, he [Colonel William Sempill] was ‘very Scotch.’’ *DNB*, p. 1177; nevertheless, Philip II had a tendency not to trust anyone, no even in his own government. Parker, *Philip II*, pp. 18, 30, 33-4.

⁸⁶ Quoted by R.S. Brydon, ‘The Finances of James VI, 1567-1603’ (University of Edinburgh Ph.D. thesis, 1925), p. 145.

⁸⁷ SCA, ‘Copy. Letter to the Duke of Alva,’ 13 Nov. 1554, CA4/1/2; SCA, ‘Document concerning negotiations regarding the treaty with Rome, Spain, etc.,’ 1596, CA4/1/8.

⁸⁸ AGS, Philip II to Mendoza, from Lisbon, E Leg. 835, fos. 29-30; *CODOIN*, xci, pp. 569-71.

⁸⁹ G. Simpson (ed.), *The Scottish Soldier Abroad, 1247-1967* (Edinburgh, 1992), p. xi.

⁹⁰ ‘Master of the household.’

⁹¹ SCA, ‘Razones por saber si Escosia es deseando al Rey d’España,’ CA4/9/10.

⁹² M. James’s arguments on the decline of Catholic political power in the Isle since Elizabeth’s accession. M. James, *Family, Lineage and Civic Society: a study of society, politics and mentality in the Durham region, 1500-1640* (Oxford, 1974), p. 151.

righteous protest against the power of the state which limited their religious and political liberties?

Of course, in the persistent policy of the nobles we can trace the prompting of religion. In fact, these earls assumed that the maintenance or enhancement of their political and military power was essential for the Catholic cause. It has become traditional for historians to over-dramatise the significance of religion and exaggerate its long-term significance. The nobility who intrigued with Spain have conventionally been represented as united group of magnates who struggled against Protestantism to carry Catholicism to Scotland. There is some truth in this, but it is unduly simplified. In fact, the earls of Huntly, Errol and Angus, contemporarily known as the leaders of the 'Spanish faction in Scotland,'⁹³ after nearly decades of being Catholic, capitulated in June 1597, signing their subscription to the Protestant Confession. Although it is most probable that they remained Catholics at heart, in public eyes they died as Protestants.⁹⁴ Moreover, not only Catholics cavorted with Spain. The political career of Francis Stewart, 5th earl of Bothwell, demonstrates the complexity and contradictions of the Scottish nobility. Through the 1580s, Bothwell, a Protestant, alternated periods of close alliance with James with sporadic contacts with Spain.⁹⁵ For some time, he even felt capable of simultaneously outwitting the intelligence systems of both Spain and England.⁹⁶ It is true that in the sixteenth century politics and religion interacted, but economic and political motives every bit as much as religious, lay behind the Scottish nobility's intrigues with Spain; and on occasion the opportunity also seems to have been seized upon to settle old scores.

The Scottish nobility, Catholic or dissident, knew that they could not survive as a force in politics without the support of a foreign political power. In 1595, the Earl of Angus wrote in a letter to Philip II: 'we have no other hope than the aid of your Highness.'⁹⁷ Spanish financial support allowed them to maintain their military, and subsequently, political, power. A clear example of these policies was the Earl of

⁹³ See for example *CSP Scot.*, x., pp. 47, 54, 61, 85.

⁹⁴ *RPC Scot.*, viii, pp. 159, 176, 262; Calderwood, *History*, vii, pp. 159, 244.

⁹⁵ R.G. Macpherson, 'Francis Stewart, 5th Earl Bothwell, c.1562-1612, lordship and politics in Jacobean Scotland' (University of Edinburgh Ph.D. thesis, 1998), p. 5.

⁹⁶ *CSP Scot.*, x, pp. 262-3, 273-4, 277.

⁹⁷ *CSP Span.*, iv, pp. 613-4; K. Brown, *Bloodfeud in Scotland, 1573-1625. Violence, justice and politics in an early modern society* (Edinburgh, 1986), p. 169.

Huntly who, while collaborating with Spain, was hastily extending his authority throughout the Highlands.⁹⁸ Moreover, it was an opportunity to show James that they were still the same race who had dictated terms to his ancestors and brought them to their knees and the Bridge of Dee affair was an explicit demonstration of force by the earls of Huntly, Errol and Crawford.⁹⁹

The Scots were conscious of the privileges given to them for the scheme to make Scotland the springboard for the 'enterprise of England.' Even the defeat of the Spanish Armada did not signal the end of a Spanish military power, but, conversely, Spain could attempt a new assault on the Isle at any time.¹⁰⁰ By now, it is evident that the nobility, quite understandably, tried to exploit their position; however, there is still little evidence of any of them sacrificing political, religious, ideological or strategic considerations for a foreign alliance.¹⁰¹ If the Scottish Catholics associated with Philip II, Elizabeth supported and financed the extreme Protestant faction in Scotland, headed by the earls of Mar and Gowrie and, in the early 1590s, Bothwell.¹⁰² But can we accuse the Scottish nobility of lack of loyalty to the country of their birth and the Crown to which they owed their privileges?¹⁰³

The facts of their history do not justify such a sweeping statement. It must be remembered that this elite's loyalty to the crown was contractual and personal; thus, any conflict, or tension, between crown and nobility could easily break or damage this rather conditional agreement.¹⁰⁴ For centuries, the division of power in the Scottish society rested on the kings and many noblemen of fairly equal standing, what historians have called the '*laissez-faire* monarchy.'¹⁰⁵ Naturally, these elites had

⁹⁸ Brown, *Bloodfeud in Scotland*, p. 147.

⁹⁹ Grant, 'The Brig o'Dee Affair,' in J. Goodare & M. Lynch (eds.), *The Reign of James VI* (East Linton, 2000), p. 103.

¹⁰⁰ *ibid.*, p. 101.

¹⁰¹ Brown, 'The Price of Friendship: the 'well affected' and English economic clientage in Scotland before 1603.' in R.A. Mason (ed.), *Scotland and England, 1286-1815* (Edinburgh, 1987), p. 155.

¹⁰² W. Ferguson, *Scotland's relations with England* (Edinburgh, 1977), pp. 93-4.

¹⁰³ In many occasions, the actions of these noblemen has been affirmed to be 'unpatriotic.' See for example G. Donaldson, 'James VI and Vanishing Frontiers,' G. Menzies (ed.), *The Scottish Nation* (London, 1972), p. 108.

¹⁰⁴ H.G.N. Gordon, 'The Political Career of Francis Stewart, earl of Bothwell, 1588-1594' (Aberdeen University Ph.D. thesis, 1952), pp. 16-7.

¹⁰⁵ J. Wormald, *Court, Kirk and Community: Scotland, 1470-1625* (London, 1981), pp. 9-20.

always competed among themselves for power and influence. Thus, the balance of powers between individuals could certainly be disturbed.¹⁰⁶

If we look at the activities of Scottish merchants in Spain, of which David Calderwood complained bitterly. We can observe a striking illustration of the fact that loyalty was still a rudimentary feeling through the period under study. The Presbyterian historian explained how they were engaged in illicit trade working as intermediaries for the English.¹⁰⁷ But the truth is that, in accusing the Scottish nobles of lack of loyalty, we are testing them by a standard which we cannot, in historic justice, apply to them. It may broadly be said that in the sixteenth century the idea of loyalty, as we understand it, was hardly realised by any class in any country, in indicting Scottish Catholics for lack of loyalty, we are in fact arraigning them for a crime which it is in truth pointless to lay specifically at their door.

A few words remain to be said regarding the motives behind the actions of the Scottish Catholic nobles. We have long been familiar with the picture of the typical Scottish nobleman of the final days of the sixteenth century, as he has been commonly represented, that he was actuated by but one motive in all his conduct – the desire to lay his hands on Spanish or English money. However, no man acts for a single motive, but if this was indeed his main incentive, he was at least not alone in his sin; throughout the later 1580s and the 1590s, although policy may have been influenced by the interests of a number of competing individuals, the ruler of country's destiny was indeed the monarch.

Through the sixteenth century, it was the universal endeavour of the kings to make themselves the absolute masters of their subjects. Not until the reign of James VI did any Scottish sovereign succeed in making himself a ruler in the fashion of Henry VIII.¹⁰⁸ The year 1578 brought an abrupt end to James's childhood, when, at the age of twelve, he became officially responsible for the government of Scotland during a brief loss of power of the regent, the earl of Morton. However, for several more years

¹⁰⁶ Brown, *Bloodfeud in Scotland*, pp. 1-9.

¹⁰⁷ See HBLL, Philip II to Diego de Chavez Orellana, 1593, Vault MSS 504-30205, 504-30522 and 504-30501, fully transcribed and translated in apps. v, vi, vii; for illicit English trade with Spain see P.J. Croft, 'English Trade with Peninsular Spain, 1558-1625' (Oxford University D.Phil. thesis, 1970), pp. 132-67.

James remained the puppet of contending intriguers and factional leaders. After falling under the influence of the Duke of Lennox, James was kidnapped by William Ruthven, 1st Earl of Gowrie, in 1582 and was forced to denounce Lennox. It became apparent almost immediately that James was powerless when confronted by a noble conspiracy. The following year James escaped from his Protestant captors and came under the influence of the Earl of Arran until he was removed from power in 1585 and was replaced by John Maitland of Thirlestane. James, now aged nineteen, began to emerge as a mature king, and began to pursue his own policies as a monarch, although most of the courses he would take until 1603 had already been mapped out for him.¹⁰⁹

Over the next few years James managed to strengthen the power of the crown over both Parliament and the Church¹¹⁰ His ultimate aim was to remove the Scottish elite's autonomous political and military power. In *The True Lawe of Free Monarchies*, James wrote:

Out of the law of God, the duty, and allegiance of the people to their lawful King, their obedience, I say, ought to be to him, as to God's Lieutenant in earth, obeying his commands in all things.¹¹¹

However, this was not going to prove an easy task; firstly due to the nobility's hereditary instincts, the memory of former privileges were too deeply ingrained for them to submit tamely to any sweeping measures enacted by James VI; secondly, because these men were James's friends, obviously true in the case of the earl of Huntly for whom he confronted the Kirk during the Bridge of Dee affair.¹¹² But it was clear the preservation of internal peace and external power depended on the affirmation of James's own authority. However, James not only desired to accomplish the consolidation of his position in Scotland, but also to secure his succession to the throne of England. In Spain it was understood that Philip II represented the will of God, and thus, he should acquire the crown of England even if he did not have valid

¹⁰⁸ Brown, *Surveys of Scottish History*, pp. 44-5.

¹⁰⁹ M. Lee, *Great Britain's Solomon: James VI and I in His Three Kingdoms* (Chicago, 1990), pp.31-58.

¹¹⁰ M. Lynch, *Scotland. A new history* (London, 1994), pp. 233-44.

¹¹¹ James VI, King of Scotland, *The True Lawe of Free Monarchies; or, the reciproock and mvtvall dytie betweixt a free king, and his naturall subjectes* (Edinburgh, 1598); J. Wormald, *Court, Kirk, and Community: Scotland, 1470-1625* (Edinburgh, 1991), p. 148.

¹¹² A.J. White, 'Religion, Politics and Society in Aberdeen, 1542-1593,' (University of Edinburgh Ph.D. thesis, 1986), pp. 319-20.

claims because the succession of a Protestant prince would be damaging.¹¹³ However, James's candidature was facing great threats not only from foreign countries, but also because he found competitors, even from within his own kingdom and family, such as Bothwell.¹¹⁴

The persistent candidature of Philip II and the *Infanta* to the throne of England might have been expected to push James closer to England and Protestantism. James, who was intelligent enough to see the advantages of alliance with England, was also aware of the benefits of foreign alliances. However, James maintained an inconsistent attitude towards Catholicism. He did not hesitate in dangerously cavorting with his Catholic subjects, some of who pinned their hope on Spanish help, in order to strengthen his claim to the English throne. However, James had good reasons to be constantly suspicious of the Anglo-Protestant faction, which in notable occasions, such as the Ruthven Raid in August 1582 and the Stirling Raid in April 1584, had conspired against him.¹¹⁵ Thus, he was even seriously prepared to consider the possible advantages of a Spanish attack on England through Scotland. This was another curious situation since James was conscious that Philip would intervene only in his own interests and not in James's; obviously, Philip would not conquer England to give it to James. However, his idea seems to have been that, in holding a balance between Protestants and Catholics, he would in his favour gain more independence to act than could be afforded by reliance on either side. As early as 1584, James VI had already showed his predisposition to Catholicism when he wrote to Pope Gregory XIII: 'I hope to be able to satisfy Your Holiness on all other points, especially if I am aided in my great need by your holiness.'¹¹⁶ His leniency to his Catholic subjects was made clear by the king's reactions to the affair of the 'Spanish Blanks,' which showed that he still hoped somehow to keep a balance between Protestants and Catholics.¹¹⁷ James certainly knew that some of his nobles were receiving Spanish money and expecting troops,¹¹⁸ and in 1594, James tried to obtain funding from the Catholic

¹¹³ G. Sabine, *Historia de la Teoría Política* (Madrid, 1992), pp. 291-4.

¹¹⁴ Macpherson, 'Francis Stewart, 5th Earl Bothwell,' p. 5.

¹¹⁵ Grant, 'The Brig o'Dee Affair,' in Goodare & Lynch, *The Reign of James VI*, p. 97.

¹¹⁶ Quoted by Mackie, 'The Secret Diplomacy of King James VI,' pp. 271-2.

¹¹⁷ J.H. Burns, 'The Political Background of the Reformation, 1513-1625,' in D. McRoberts (ed.), *Essays on the Scottish Reformation, 1513-1625* (Glasgow, 1962), p. 31.

¹¹⁸ J.D. Mackie, 'A Secret Agent of James VI,' *SHR*, ix (1912), p. 376.

earls, probably knowing that they had been subsidised by Spain.¹¹⁹ James's policy was to make friends with the stronger party.¹²⁰ In 1601, the Jesuit Father Alexander McQuhirrie wrote that 'the King hated all Catholics, except so far as he could make use of them for the purpose of furthering his designs upon the English Crown.'¹²¹ In this respect the story is soon told: James learned that the political and economic side of an alliance with England was more rewarding. Thus, it was left for James, for the first time, to effectively unite the crowns of England, Scotland and Ireland.

Thus far we have been seeking only to understand the conditions which underlay the action of the ruling forces of Scotland to intrigue with Spain, but the most important question remains: what were the effects of their actions on Scottish politics? Clearly, the first result of their collaborations with Catholic powers was that their assaults jolted the country out of its old local framework, giving Scotland European significance. However, the judgement of its significance in the construction of the country is far too sweeping; the Spanish activity in Scotland was not designed to promote a higher civilisation; on the contrary, it was purely destructive. Moreover, the Spanish involvement in Scottish politics during the 1580 and 1590s confirmed Protestant preconceptions of a conspiracy theory.¹²² Protestant fears, which seem rather forced in the light of the internal situation, were justified only in relation to the progress of the Counter-Reformation on the continent and the possibility that Spain would intervene in Scotland. Subsequently, they tended to see Philip II's shadow lying behind most, if not all, opposition to the English and Scottish governments. In their views of contemporary foreign affairs, they had, since the beginning of James's reign, constantly suspected the machinations of a Catholic league, whereby Spain, probably in conjunction with an internal rising, would combine to destroy Protestantism in the Isle. This helped to revive a flagging English interest in Scotland;¹²³ clearly Elizabeth I sought to wean or cajole Scotland from the orbit of Spain. Thus, Scotland became the battleground of the great trial of strength between

¹¹⁹ J. Goodare, *State and Society in Early Modern Scotland* (Oxford, 1999), p. 118.

¹²⁰ G. Menzies, *The Scottish Nation* (London, 1972), p. 107; White, 'Religion, Politics and Society in Aberdeen,' pp. 319-20.

¹²¹ W. Ward, 'James VI and the Papacy,' *SHR*, ii (1905), p. 250.

¹²² J.H. Burns, *The True Law of Kingship. Concepts of monarchy in early-modern Scotland* (Oxford, 1996), p. 224.

¹²³ *CSP Scot.*, v, p. 664.

pan-European Protestantism and the Counter-Reformation; a struggle between Spain, a giant in decline, and a rising power, England.

CHAPTER I

The Outbreak of the Spanish Interest and Relations with Scotland, 1580-1584

The Struggle for the Young King of Scotland, 1580-1

Given the international climate, the opportunity for Philip to influence Scotland became possible following the overthrow of the regent Morton,¹²⁴ the leader of the pro-English faction in the realm. In September 1579, King James's distant French kinsman, Esmé Stewart, the Sieur d'Aubigny, had arrived in Scotland. By 1580, Esmé, a former Catholic who supposedly converted to Protestantism, had become the first of James's favourites. It was his presence among those who directly influenced James and subsequently, among those who controlled Scottish policy and affairs, that made Elizabeth suspicious.¹²⁵ Two of the most influential forces of Europe at the time, Philip and the Guises, could work together now in Scotland against England.¹²⁶

These fears might have materialised with Guise's plan to liberate Mary, in the form of a combined army from Spain and France. However, the project was refused by the French King because of the possible marriage of the duke of Alençon to Elizabeth. Mary Stewart, upon finally realising that she would not receive support from the French King under these circumstances, wrote to Guise in February 1580 asking him to put her, her son and his realm, into Philip II's hands, without reserve.¹²⁷ There was no doubt that the 'auld alliance' with France was finally broken, and had been replaced with Spain.

On 11 February 1580, Beaton visited the Spanish ambassador to France, Juan de Vargas Mejia. The archbishop told the ambassador that Guise and Beaton himself had persuaded Mary to finally put herself without any reservations into the hands of Philip II. To prove this, he showed Mejia a letter from Mary herself, in which she expressed

¹²⁴ Hewitt, *Scotland under Morton*, p. 181.

¹²⁵ Queen Elizabeth gave instructions to Captain Errington to: 'inform himself what alterations in the State are either presently wrought or in working by the practice of d'Aubigny.' *CSP Scot.*, v, pp. 380-1; recent works seem to have discovered a more 'intimate' relation between James VI and Esmé Stewart. See D. Bergeron, *King James and Letters of Homoerotic Desire* (Iowa, 1999), p. 33.

¹²⁶ Hewitt, *Scotland under Morton*, p. 181.

her intention to order the capture of her son by her Catholic supporters in Scotland, and to carry James to Spain to have him wed to whomever the Spanish monarch chose. The archbishop organised a secret interview between Guise and Meija the following day. During this meeting, Beaton assured them that, with the alliance of the Scottish Catholics, the Scottish Queen, Philip II and the Guises, the ruin of Elizabeth was assured. He also emphasized that Mary ‘was determined not to go out of her prison, but to become the Queen of England.’¹²⁸

On 13 February, only one day after the interview, Meija sent a dispatch to Philip. In his letter, he provided a clear explanation of the advantages of this plan:

si, V[uestra] M[ajestad] tuviesse directe o indirecte a su devocion Inglaterra y Escocia, ternia por conquistados los Estados de Flandes, los quales posseydos por via de conquista, serian suficientes a hazer monarca a V[uestra] M[ajestad] y que pudiesse dar la ley al mundo...deve tener la mira a que V[uestra] M[ajestad] case su hijo con una de las sermissimas infantas, haziendole rey de Inglaterra y de Escocia, reduziendole a la fee, y a ella con quien quisiere; y deve averle passado por el pensamiento con el principe de Parma, no aviendo otro, porque se que lo han puesto en platica.¹²⁹

While Meija was waiting for Philip’s response, the isolated and impatient Mary sent another envoy, John Leslie, to the Spanish ambassador. The terms of his task were identical to those of Beaton, which Meija merely forwarded to the Spanish monarch.¹³⁰

The month of February had not elapsed when Philip replied to his ambassador in Paris full of optimism for this plot. In his ‘response a faire au nom de Philippe II a don Juan de Vargas Mexia’ the Spanish monarch gave orders to leave all the arrangements for the capture and deportation of Mary’s son, James VI; to assure Mary that James would be treated as if he was his own son; and that their presence in any of his

¹²⁷ Tauton, *History of the Jesuits in England, 1580-1773* (London, 1901), p. 94.

¹²⁸ M. Hume, *Espanoles e Ingleses en el siglo XVI* (Madrid, 1903), pp. 156-7; it should be noted that the first Spanish project to take out of Scotland King James VI to provide a Roman Catholic education for him dated 1573. AGS, ‘Proyectos de Escocia,’ 1573, E Leg. 827.

¹²⁹ ‘if Your Highness would have direct or indirectly England and Scotland devoted to you, you will have conquered the states of Flanders, which, once possessed by conquest, would be enough to make Your Highness a monarch who would be able to give law to the world...she [Mary Stewart] must have the goal that Your Highness will marry her son with one of your daughters, making him King of England and Scotland, reducing him to the [Catholic] faith, and [marry] her to whom you want; and it must have gone through her mind with the Prince of Parma, not being any other, because I know they have already been talking about it.’ Don Juan de Vargas Mexia to Philippe II, 13 Feb. 1580. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 207-8.

¹³⁰ Don Juan de Vargas Meija to Philip II, 21 Feb. 1580. *ibid.*, v, pp. 209-13.

dominions, especially in Spain, would be welcomed.¹³¹ However, when in March 1580 James VI appointed d'Aubigny as earl of Lennox and started to favour the Catholics, who had been relegated during the times of the regent Morton, the resurgence of Catholicism in Scotland was assumed to have arrived. It was, therefore, obviously not the right time for the Catholics and Spain to remove James from Scotland.

Elizabeth had reasons to be suspicious and worried: Mary was considering the appointment of John Seton as her envoy to Philip. A few days earlier, at her prison in Sheffield, Mary had received an envoy of John Seton's father – Lord Seton – who informed her of James's good disposition.¹³² However, Henry, 3rd earl of Huntingdon, had declared that Esmé Stewart could easily be persuaded to give his devotion to Elizabeth.¹³³ Elizabeth knew that the politico-religious destinies of England and Scotland were inseparable.

Nevertheless, Elizabeth was not the only one who did not trust Mary and her supporters. On 23 March 1580, Mendoza sent a dispatch from London to Philip reporting an interview between Mary and 'a Scottish man of the house of Hamilton, who had covered his face with a cloth.' The said man had offered to put 'the King of Scotland in her hands, assuring that he had gained James's trust when he was in Scotland.' However, Mendoza being suspicious of such an offer, informed Philip of his doubts concerning this matter. Meanwhile, he let some friends of M. de Castelnau, the French ambassador to England, know about the meeting and the offers made.¹³⁴ On 17 April, nearly a month later, the Spanish ambassador explained his movements to Philip: firstly, Mendoza did not trust the Hamiltons nor their intentions, because he had been informed that Morton had conspired with them, even though they had previously been mortal enemies.¹³⁵ Also, Mendoza, an astute man, made a great demonstration of his diplomatic skills when he made sure that the French ambassador

¹³¹ Philip II to don Juan de Vargas Mejia, Feb. 1580. Teulet, *Relations*, v, p. 213.

¹³² Mary Stewart to Beaton, 18 Mar. 1580. Labanoff, *Lettres*, v, pp. 130-8.

¹³³ [Henry, 3rd earl of Huntingdon] to Sir Francis Walsingham, 12 Feb. 1580. HMC *Hasting*, v, p. 19.

¹³⁴ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 23 Mar. 1580, E Leg. 833, fo. 56; *CODOIN*, xci, p. 470; it should be noticed that the Hamiltons had already been accused of being 'pensionaries to the Kynge [of Spain].' AGS, 'Documentos diplomaticos diversos,' E Leg. 577, fo. 145.

¹³⁵ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 17 Apr. 1580, E Leg. 833, fos. 142-143; *CODOIN*, xci, pp. 475-8; for the political background of the Hamilton-Morton rivalry see Donaldson, *All the Queen's men*, pp. 134-5.

would hear of this. He knew that the French King would oppose any such plot, and would therefore use all his efforts to obstruct such a plan.¹³⁶

For the first time Spanish, English and French fears were aligned: Mary and her supporters might be able to seize James VI. Elizabeth did not want a rebellion in the North;¹³⁷ Philip did not want France to have Scotland through d'Aubigny; and the King of France feared that the success of Mary and her son might initiate a strengthening of the house of Guise.¹³⁸

Mary sent orders to Beaton to despatch a post to Spain to crave a sum of money,¹³⁹ and Thomas Kerr of Ferniehurst was sent to collect it.¹⁴⁰ But on 10 July 1580, Mendoza received two dispatches from Philip in which he was asked to visit Mary to inform her of their intention to postpone the affair because of the parlous situation they were suffering in the Netherlands and Portugal. In fact, the main obstacle was the sudden death of Mejia, which had punctured a hole in the Spanish intelligence system. On the following day, following Philip's commands, Mendoza visited Mary, who accepted this news with stoicism.¹⁴¹

Nevertheless, Mary was pertinacious, and decided to play each side off against each other. Thus, on 24 July 1580 from her prison at Sheffield, she wrote to Beaton asking him to contact d'Aubigny to ascertain the opinion of her son on being transported to Spain and marrying one of Philip's daughters. Moreover, an old proposal of a marriage between James and the second daughter of the duke of Lorraine was being reconsidered.¹⁴²

Within a week, Elizabeth had decided to send Robert Bowes to Scotland in order to visit James VI and deal with the earl of Morton, as well as to inform her on the current state of the kingdom.¹⁴³ Elizabeth was resolute in preventing any foreign

¹³⁶ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 23 Mar. 1580, E Leg. 833, fo. 56; *CODOIN*, xci, p. 470.

¹³⁷ See for example *CSP Scot.*, v, pp. 416-21.

¹³⁸ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 18 June 1580, E Leg. 833, fo. 153; *CODOIN*, xci, pp. 488-91.

¹³⁹ *CSP Scot.*, v, pp. 414-5.

¹⁴⁰ *ibid.*, v, p. 430.

¹⁴¹ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 7 Aug. 1580, E Leg. 833, fos. 138-9; *CODOIN*, xci, pp. 504-7.

¹⁴² Mary Stewart to Beaton, 24 July 1580. Labanoff, *Lettres*, v, pp. 171-7; see also AGS, 'Projectos del Consejo de Paris para casar Jacobo Stuart con la hija del duque de Lorena,' E Leg. 833, fo. 132.

¹⁴³ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 7 Aug. 1580, E Leg. 833, fo. 137; BL, deciphered letter of Mendoza, 16

power, especially Spain, from dealing with d'Aubigny.¹⁴⁴ Bowes's movements were closely followed by Mendoza, who commented that 'esta gente procura de todas maneras apoderarse de aquel Rey'.¹⁴⁵ Mendoza had already reported to Philip as early as 12 March 1580 that 'the Queen of England was suspicious of the affairs of Scotland, seeing that *Monsieur de Obigni's* situation was so good [in the realm] that he could "take possession" of the King [of Scotland]'.¹⁴⁶ In fact, Elizabeth was so concerned about d'Aubigny's influence on the young King that she decided to send Walter Miller, and one of her Protestant advisers, to visit James.¹⁴⁷

Surprisingly, the year of 1580 came to a close with the first intervention in the international diplomatic world of James VI as protagonist and instigator. On 4 December, Mendoza informed Philip that a man had come from Scotland to seek an audience with Elizabeth. This man had informed her that James had renewed his league with France, sending a present to Guise and a letter with his title as 'king,' something that he had not done before for respect to his mother and for the same reason the King of France, since many years previously, had not wanted to have a representative with the title of ambassador to Scotland. Elizabeth and her ministers were suspicious of this information, but even more so when the envoy claimed that Morton had become reconciled with the French, and had allied with d'Aubigny. Her suspicions were based on what was being said within Scotland: that each day Lennox's support within the realm increased and that very soon he was going to be declared heir to the throne. Elizabeth knew that Guise would not have contacts within Scotland without the French King becoming aware; however, she decided to entertain Morton with offers. Mendoza believed that Morton was going to become pro-English again if the French did not give him enough money.¹⁴⁸

On 31 December 1580, Sir James Bedford, who had recently arrived in London from France, accused Morton of involvement in the murder of, amongst others, Lord Darnley, James VI's father. Thus, Morton was promptly arrested. It was also being

Sept. 1580, Add. MS 28,420, fos. 26-30. See app. i.

¹⁴⁴ *CSP Scot.*, v, p. 467.

¹⁴⁵ 'This people [the English] tries by all means to seize that King [James VI].' BL, deciphered letter of Mendoza, 16 Sept. 1580, Add. MS 28,420, fos. 26-30; for the full text and translation see app. i.

¹⁴⁶ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 12 Mar. 1580, E Leg. 832, fos. 15-6; *CODOIN*, xci, pp. 463-6.

¹⁴⁷ BL, deciphered letter of Mendoza, 16 Sept. 1580, Add. MS 28,420, fos. 26-30. See app. i.

¹⁴⁸ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 4 Dec. 1580, E Leg. 833, fo. 130; *CODOIN*, xci, pp. 512-4.

said in London that Sir James Bedfort, the accuser, had been in Spain, and that Philip had commanded to give him a great sum of money, which 'had been used to gain some partisans in Scotland to obtain the execution of the business.' The clearest proof of the Spanish involvement in this issue was a letter from Mendoza to Philip, dated 15 January 1581. Mendoza knew the convenience that would be caused for Spain if Morton was eliminated from the scene. According to the document, Mendoza had gotten in touch with some of his agents and friends in Scotland, and had suggested that they persuade James VI on the necessity of punishing Morton.¹⁴⁹ Involved or not, this matter was being closely followed by the Spanish.¹⁵⁰ And, when Morton was finally executed in June 1581, new hopes for a restoration of the Catholic faith in the realm were arising within the Catholic community.¹⁵¹

Being strongly influenced by Lennox, James increasingly became inclined towards his mother and the Catholic faction in Scotland, countenancing the enemies of Regent Morton, the newly deceased leader of the pro-English faction in Scotland.¹⁵² It firstly must be reckoned that with Morton off the scene, Esmé became, once again, the focus of foreign machinations, and seemed open to approaches from the exiled Mary and the Catholic interests. The details of those intrigues were clouded by the obscurity arising from the degree of secrecy which was involved. The essential facts were that there was some communication between James and his mother; between James and various Catholic agents in Scotland; and between James and the militant Catholic wing in France led by Guise who was, after all James's cousin. However, Philip II was very much involved in these intrigues because the Spanish government was at that time a much more aggressive Catholic agent than the French government.

A wave of fear and aversion against the Catholics had begun sweeping across England when the first rumours and news about the Pope, Gregory XIII, financing an army composed of Italians, French, Spanish and Irishmen. This army, with the papal emissary Doctor Nicolas Sander, had disembarked in Munster to attack England in the

¹⁴⁹ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 15 Jan. 1581, E Leg. 835, fo. 2; *CODOIN*, xci, pp. 540-2.

¹⁵⁰ See for example Mendoza to Philip II, 31 Dec. 1580. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 214-5; AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 9 Jan. 1581, E Leg. 835, fo. 6; *CODOIN*, xci, pp. 536-9.

¹⁵¹ Knox, 'Historical Introduction' in *Records of English Catholics under the Penal Laws* (London, 1882), p. xxxv.

¹⁵² See for example PRO, James VI to Mary Stewart, 29 Jan. 1581, SP 53/11/44; James VI, *Letters*, pp. 44-5.

beginning of 1581, from Ireland. The expedition failed, but the Elizabethan government knew it could have succeeded. Nevertheless, it helped to show how vulnerable Elizabeth was on the west and north coasts. The Government, from then onwards, had taken much notice of this and tried to look for all manner of solutions. The planned invasion, of which the Government was already conscious,¹⁵³ had already been prepared in great detail; proof being in the coming of the Jesuits beforehand to prepare the land for the foreign forces that would arrive later.¹⁵⁴

This threat of a spiritual invasion or a modern crusade, which had begun with the arrival of this Jesuit mission to the Isle, made it manifestly clear that the English had to take action. On 10 February 1581, Castelnau commented in his dispatch to the French monarch that the preoccupation of Elizabeth was with recent rumours of a plan for the marriage of Philip and Mary. Moreover, he assured him that Elizabeth was convinced that the intrigues in Scotland stemmed from James's favourite, d'Aubigny, and declared that she had taken the resolution that under no circumstances should James be able to get closer to the Spanish side.¹⁵⁵ On 28 February 1581, Castelnau reported again of Elizabeth's fears of the Spanish influence on James. He wrote: 'la dicte Royne est en merueilleuse deffiance que le Roy d'Espagne en pratique avec ce jeune Prince d'Escosse, et ne recherche l'amitié et l'alliance.'¹⁵⁶

For the moment, the French ambassador seemed confident that James would satisfy Elizabeth, despite the Spanish intrigues and offers.¹⁵⁷ But Elizabeth had been informed of d'Aubigny's plots with Spain by Thomas Randolph, who assured that 'his chiefest delaing is to practise with the Queen of Scots, French and Spanish ambassador.'¹⁵⁸ Elizabeth had decided upon making Philip break his relations with James for fear James would let the Spanish enter the country and then travel with them to the continent.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵³ *CSP Scot.*, v, pp. 635-8.

¹⁵⁴ According to Meyer one of the main supporters of this policy of invasion was Persons. A.O. Meyer, *England and the Catholic Church under Queen Elizabeth* (London, 1917), p. 198.

¹⁵⁵ M. de Castelnau to Henry III, 10 Feb. 1581. Teulet, *Relations*, iii, pp. 87-99.

¹⁵⁶ 'The said Queen [Elizabeth] is in marvellous suspicion of the King of Spain in practice with the Prince of Scotland, and in search of friendship and alliance.' M. de Castelnau to the Queen of France, 28 Feb. 1581. Teulet, *Relations*, iii, pp. 99-100.

¹⁵⁷ M. de Castelnau to Henry III, 10 Mar. 1581. Teulet, *Relations*, iii, p. 101.

¹⁵⁸ *CSP Scot.*, v, p. 633.

¹⁵⁹ *ibid.*, v, pp. 664-5.

The fear seemed to have faded when, on 17 March 1581, Mendoza included with his regular dispatch to Philip II, a letter supposedly written by James VI, along with a Spanish translation. The said document was a direct attack on Catholicism. The Spaniard claimed that it was probably a forgery. He suspected that the letter had probably been written in England for a clear reason: even with the most pessimistic outcome, it would, at least, stop any communication between Catholics of both countries.¹⁶⁰

Mendoza reacted very quickly and, on the same day, 17 March, sent a second dispatch to the King with a copy of a letter of Mary, in which she reported the warm welcome that the missionaries had received from the council of James VI and the Catholics in the realm, and the real possibilities of the conversion of her son to the Catholic religion.¹⁶¹ Nevertheless, this plot did not affect Philip II's interests in Scotland, probably due to the reports of Tassis, who in April 1581 replaced Mejia in the Spanish embassy in France, the latter having died in July 1580. On 10 April 1581, less than a month after the discovery of the letters, Tassis informed Philip that never before had the realm of Scotland been so ready to receive aid. All of this thanks to James's determination to restore the Catholic faith and, if necessary, to start an open war against England.¹⁶² If this was true, it would be the way for Spain to compensate for the league between England and France.

Mary saw Tassis as a possible new ally, as he was close to Philip II; and she asked Beaton to try to gain his trust.¹⁶³ Tassis wrote in a dispatch to Philip that the Queen of Scots had asked him to report that the ideal solution would be to send her son to Ireland until all the negotiations of friendship between Spain and Scotland had concluded.¹⁶⁴ Then, James could pass to Spain, to be married with one of the

¹⁶⁰ It should be noted that those days the English intelligence was informing of possible amities of the King of Scotland with foreign powers. See for example, *ibid.*, v, pp. 658-9; only one day after the appearance of the letter, 18 Mar. 1581, Walsingham informed Thomas Randolph that 'D'Aubigny should ever be won to be at her majesty's devotion' and that the Scots 'shall be assisted with the arm of both Spain and France,' *ibid.*, v, pp. 664-5.

¹⁶¹ AGS, Philip II to Mendoza, from Lisbon, without date, among the papers of 1581, E Leg. 835, fos. 29-30; *CODOIN*, xci, pp. 569-71.

¹⁶² Tassis to Philip II, 10 Apr. 1581. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 224-7.

¹⁶³ Hume, *Espanoles e Ingleses*, pp. 157-8.

¹⁶⁴ See a later letter of Mary in the same terms. Mary Stewart to Beaton, 4 Mar. 1581. Labanoff,

Infantas.¹⁶⁵ Mary had given orders to her ambassador to write to Lord Ogilvy,¹⁶⁶ one of James's intimate associates, to ask him to assure a port in the lands of Archibald Campbell, 6th earl of Argyll, to be prepared to transport James to Ireland. Tassis also reported that she had ordered John Leslie, the bishop of Ross,¹⁶⁷ to make a new petition again to the Pope's nuncio, Father Taberna, to ask him for money for her son.¹⁶⁸

The alarm was raised again when, on 24 April, some feigned letters from d'Aubigny to the Pope and Philip were intercepted and forwarded to Elizabeth. Alexander Teulet claimed that it was probable that these letters were authentic.¹⁶⁹ Nevertheless, d'Aubigny denied the authenticity of such letters¹⁷⁰ and in the Spanish ambassadorial dispatches this event was not even mentioned. Nevertheless, Elizabeth gave orders to Walsingham to meet with Ludovic Hamilton, to ask him to inform James that if he had any communication with Spain, she would declare in the Parliament his exclusion as heir to the English throne. Mary decided to counter attack Elizabeth's efforts to influence James to take her side and, on 4 May 1581, she wrote to Mendoza claiming that she was doing everything in her power to convert the nation to Catholicism, and that she had sent James some Catholic books, which she had been informed that he had started to enjoy.¹⁷¹ Mary had always preferred Mendoza to Tassis,¹⁷² since Mendoza was becoming increasingly supportive of her cause, but also perhaps because Mendoza was a devout Catholic, with whom she may have thought that she had more in common. This confidence was mutual. Mendoza confessed, in a dispatch to Philip dated 2 June 1581, that the best way to have established contacts in Scotland

Lettres, v, pp. 211-7.

¹⁶⁵ By 1 April, Walsingham was already informing that there was not reason to fear the King's transportation nor marriage. *CSP Scot.*, v, pp. 697-8.

¹⁶⁶ James, 6th Lord Ogilvy of Airlie, who in 1568 was a partisan and devoted servant of Mary Stewart, and who later, in 1596 acted as James VI's envoy to Denmark to the coronation as king of Christian IV. He died in 1606. See Douglas, *Peerage*, i, p. 31.

¹⁶⁷ On him see M. Beckett, 'The Political Works of John Leslie, Bishop of Ross (1527-96)' (St Andrews University Ph.D. thesis, 2002).

¹⁶⁸ Tassis to Philip II, 10 Apr. 1581. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 224-7; Walsingham had informed that the bishop of Ross had already been in Spain and Rome treating Mary's case, last August. *CSP Scot.*, v, p. 493.

¹⁶⁹ See Esmé Stewart to Mary Stewart, 7 Mar. 1582. Teulet, *Relations*, v, p. 106.

¹⁷⁰ M. de Castelnau to Henry III, 24 Apr. 1581. *ibid.*, v, pp. 104-7.

¹⁷¹ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 4 May 1581, E Leg. 835, fo. 92; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 11-5.

¹⁷² Hume, *Espanoles e Ingleses*, pp. 157-8; AGS, 'correspondencia cifra de don Bernardino de Mendoza,' 1581, E Legs. 834-5.

was through Mary, a clear demonstration of the importance of the alliance between them.¹⁷³

Accordingly, Mendoza informed Philip that Scotland was mainly Catholic,¹⁷⁴ and that the principal Catholic lords of Scotland had no contact with Elizabeth. They would not break with Elizabeth, unless they had support from foreign forces.¹⁷⁵ Again, a new strategy of attack against England was needed, and Mary was there to give the solution: on 5 June, she proposed to Philip that he should send 2,000 men to Ireland with the colours of the Pope to stop Elizabeth from helping the rebels in Flanders.¹⁷⁶ This, obviously unviable, plan was probably a response to her desperate situation. James was aging, but was not maturing into the form that they had wished. On 15 June, Mendoza mentioned that despite Mary's efforts, James 'was showing great cleverness to gain his best design,' but was not close to collaborating with the Spaniard.¹⁷⁷ And, only five days later, Castelnau claimed that Elizabeth did not trust James because of his dealings with Spain.¹⁷⁸

However, James's attitude did not discourage any of them. Gordon Donaldson claimed that Elizabeth permitted James to deal with foreign powers, if it was for the good of his candidature to the English throne.¹⁷⁹ And Philip, on 22 July 1581, whilst in Lisbon, wrote a letter to Mendoza, that he still did not believe that the young King James was a dead end, and asked the ambassador not to lose contact with Mary and her son, exhorting her to influence her son to try to convert him to the obedience of the Catholic Church.¹⁸⁰

The Jesuit Intrigues of 1580-1582

At the beginning of September 1580, Mary had written to Father Robert Persons, an English Jesuit with whom she had been in correspondence since the times of her imprisonment, asking for some Jesuits to be sent to Scotland for the conversion of her

¹⁷³ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 2 June 1581, E Leg. 835, fos. 70-2; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 33-9.

¹⁷⁴ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 4 May 1581, E Leg. 835, fo. 94; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 9-10.

¹⁷⁵ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 2 June 1581, E Leg. 835, fos. 70-2; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 33-9.

¹⁷⁶ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 5 June 1581, E Leg. 835, fos. 7-8; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 41-4.

¹⁷⁷ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 15 June 1581, E Leg. 835, fo. 75; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 48-51.

¹⁷⁸ M. de Castelnau to Henry III, 20 June 1581. Teulet, *Relations*, iii, pp. 115-8.

¹⁷⁹ G. Donaldson, Scotland, *James V to James VII* (Edinburgh, 1965), p. 176.

¹⁸⁰ Philip II to Mendoza, 22 July 1581. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 228-9.

son, James, who was at the time fifteen years old.¹⁸¹ Later in his life, Persons wrote in two different documents about this period:

en el año 1580, un especial cuidado mio fue buscar a peticion y orden de su buena madre la conversion a la Religion Catolica de este nuestro nuevo Rey.¹⁸²

For the year 1580, when by our superior's orders, I first went to England, I began to study the welfare of the King of Scotland in every possible way.¹⁸³

Persons had also been in touch with Guise since 1578, thanks to his spiritual director, Father Claude Mathieu, but he would not become involved with the Spanish cause until November 1580. A month after he received instructions from Mary, when looking for asylum, he stayed in the house of the Spanish ambassador in London, Mendoza.¹⁸⁴

During his stay there, Mendoza and Persons had several conversations about the situation of the Isle. Tauton, in his *History of the Jesuits*, claimed that it was probable that, during this time, Persons started to write the book criticising Elizabeth, which appeared signed by Doctor William Allen in the times of the Spanish Armada and claimed James VI's conversion to the Spanish cause. Nevertheless, quite clearly, Mendoza and Persons had discussed the benefits of the use of missionaries in Scotland.¹⁸⁵ By then, Philip had already given his consent to Mendoza for sending the missionaries:

y comenzando por los cuatro medios que los dichos católicos de Escocia proponen para reducir el Reino a la Fe Católica, no hay duda sino que el primero de la vía de la predicación es el mas suave y seguro, y que los demás son de riesgo y mucha consideración, porque el apoderarse los católicos del gobierno y cosas de aquel Reino, de manera que necesiten al Rey, quiza no sería tan fácil como piensan; lo otro de deponerle de la Corona mientras viviese su madre, caso que no fuese Católico, es de muy gran dificultad, y contra lo que le han jurado, y estando la Reina ausente y presa sobre la manera del gobierno y las personas que le habían de administrar herviria de confusion el Reino; pues tratar de sacarle del Reino (que es lo último), para que después se convierta, es cuasi privarle del, y quedar la conversión en duda.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸¹ Eguiluz, *Persons*, p. 71; on him see F. Edwards, *Robert Persons: the biography of an Elizabethan Jesuit, 1546-1610* (St. Louis, 1995).

¹⁸² 'In the year of 1580, a special task for me was, following petition and orders of his [James VI's] good mother, to intend the conversion to the Catholic religion of our new king.' Quoted by Rev. S.J. Pollen (ed.), *The Memoirs of Father Robert Persons*, ii (CRS, 1906), pp. 212-3.

¹⁸³ Persons to Crichton, from Seville, 10 May 1596. Tauton, *History of the Jesuits*, pp. 174-6.

¹⁸⁴ Eguiluz, *Persons*, p. 70

¹⁸⁵ *ibid.*, p. 71; the book they referred to is *Conference on the Next Succession*, published in 1594.

¹⁸⁶ 'and starting from the four ways that the said Catholics of Scotland propose to reduce the kingdom to the Catholic faith, there is not doubt but that the first, the use of preaching, is the easiest and most secure, and that the others are of risk and deep consideration, because the seizure by the Catholics of the government and things of that kingdom, in a way that they would need the King [James VI], maybe it would not be as easy as they think; the [idea] of deposing him of the crown while his mother lives, in the case that he was not Catholic, is of great difficulty and against what they have sworn to him, and

However, the Jesuit mission to Scotland was postponed for nearly a year because of Pope Gregory XIII's involvement in an expedition to attack England via Ireland at the beginning of 1581. This enterprise failed, but it proved successful in demonstrating the necessity for the Jesuit missionaries to get to work beforehand to prepare the land for the foreign forces that would arrive later.¹⁸⁷

As we have seen, there had been many exhortations to influence and to convert the young King of Scotland to the obedience of the Catholic Church. But James was not the only means for the Spanish to affect Scotland and to annoy the English Queen, and Mendoza knew it. However, if Persons, whom became a loyal friend when they met in September 1580, would get control of the seminary of Rheims, from where it was thought that many missionaries would be able to enter England and Scotland, the Spanish cause would spread rapidly through the Isle. The president of the Seminary was Allen, and Mendoza thought that it was necessary to ally with him or, if necessary, remove him. Nothing would have been more persuasive than obtaining the cardinal's hat for him. Mendoza, on 6 April 1581, wrote to Philip II proposing the names of Fathers Sanders and Allen for the purple. On 28 May, the Spanish monarch replied saying that he agreed and that he had ordered Mendoza to write to the Pope about it.¹⁸⁸

It was clear that Mendoza had two good and loyal friends in Persons and Allen; in a letter of 4 July 1581, when Mendoza looked like he was going to be expelled from England, Persons, who was in England with Father Campion, asked Allen to exert pressure to get him to be the Spanish ambassador to France, from where he still would be able to do great things for the cause.¹⁸⁹

being the Queen absent and prisoner, confusion would take over on [which should be] the ways of government and the persons who should administrate it; because, to try to take him out of the kingdom (what is the last thing) to convert him later is nearly to deprive him of it [the kingdom], and leave the conversion in doubt.' AGS, Philip II to Mendoza, from Lisbon without date, among the papers of 1581, E Leg. 835, fos. 29-30; *CODOIN*, xci, pp. 569-71.

¹⁸⁷ According to Meyer, one of the main supporters of this policy of invasion was Persons. Meyer, *England and the Catholic Church*, p. 198.

¹⁸⁸ Tauton, *History of the Jesuits*, pp. 72-3.

¹⁸⁹ L. Hicks (ed.), *Letters and Memorials of Father Robert Persons, S.J.*, xxxix (CRS, 1942), pp. 71-2; Philip II commented that the Queen of Scots and other personages (Persons and Allen) also thought that it was not the right time to transport him out of the country, with which he agreed. AGS, Philip II to Mendoza, from Lisbon, without date, among the papers of 1581, E Leg. 835, fos. 29-30; *CODOIN*, xci, pp. 569-71; for Mendoza's long lasting relation with Persons see 'Important considerations which

After 17 July 1581, when Father Campion had been arrested, Persons had slipped across to France, declaring that his fleeing England had not been the fear of martyrdom,¹⁹⁰ but the necessity of, firstly, establishing a more intimate connection with Allen and the missionaries of Rheims; secondly, to establish a printing press outside England, far from the Government, for educational and devotional propaganda and to print political and religious polemical books; and thirdly and most importantly, to prepare and organise the invasion force to Scotland, seen now as the only route for the success against England.¹⁹¹ The Jesuit declared: ‘another cause also of my coming over (from England to France) was to make a mission of Scotch Fathers into Scotland, which by letters I procured before from the General.’¹⁹²

The Scottish mission was his preponderant priority, and he went to Rouen to meet his friend George Gilbert, who advised him to go to Rome with his petition for Jesuits to be sent on an evangelical mission to Scotland.¹⁹³ Persons wrote to Father Gaspar Heywood, appointing him as superior Father of the mission whilst he was in exile in France.¹⁹⁴ He also sent a letter to the General of the Society of Jesus, Father Aquaviva, declaring his conviction that the best way to restore Catholicism in the Isle was through Scotland.¹⁹⁵ Thus, Persons claimed that ‘now Scotland is our chief hope; for there depends not only the conversion of England; but also that of all the northern parts of [Europe]; for the right of the English throne belongs (when she who now reigns is extinguished) to the Queen of Scotland and her son, of whose conversion we have no great hope; and it is important the chance should not be neglected.’¹⁹⁶ But Persons was not the only member of the Company that believed in the necessity of the

ought to mooue all true and found Catholiques,’ in *The Copies of Certain Discourses* (Roane, 1601), pp. 28-38.

¹⁹⁰ As Guilday pointed out, the publication of this condemnation to death was probably what changed his plans and kept him for two years at Rouen away from England. P. Guilday, *The English Catholic Refugees on the Continent, 1578-1795* (London, 1914), p. 128.

¹⁹¹ Pollen, *The Memoirs of Father Robert Persons*, ii, p. 30.

¹⁹² Autobiographical notes of Persons collected in Stonyhurst MSS, in Knox (ed.), *Letters and Memorials of Cardinal Allen*, ii, p. 229.

¹⁹³ Eguiluz, *Persons*, p. 89.

¹⁹⁴ *ibid.*, p. xl.

¹⁹⁵ See Persons to Aquaviva, 21 Oct. 1581, printed in Pollen, *The Counter-Reformation in Scotland* (London, 1921), pp. 31-4; for Father Aquaviva see P. Ribadeneira, *Illustrium Scriptorum Religionis Societatis Iesu Catalogus* (Moretum, 1608), pp. 42-3.

¹⁹⁶ Persons to Aquaviva, from Rouen, 26 Sept. 1582, printed in Tauton, *History of the Jesuits*, p. 88; also quoted by Guilday, *The English Catholic Refugees*, p. 129.

Scottish mission. Father William Crichton also wrote to Father Aquaviva and to the Pope asking for missionaries to be sent to Scotland, his motherland.¹⁹⁷

All these movements were made by Persons in secret, without anyone knowing of it, apart from James Beaton and Claude Mathieu, Beaton's immediate superior as Provincial of the Company in France. Gilbert also agreed to hide the location of his friend. It was not prudent to let the English government be suspicious of the escape of the most dangerous English Jesuit.¹⁹⁸

In the summer of 1581, William Watts, an English secular priest, was sent by Persons to Scotland to investigate and confirm that everything was being developed as it had been planned.¹⁹⁹ Person wrote later in his life:

and at once sent at my own expense a certain priest, William Watts, into Scotland. I afterwards sent in Father Holt. And as the affairs went on well, I wrote to our General to send into Scotland some of the Scotch members of the Society, and when it was determined and reverence should make a trial, you will easily recollect how willingly I assisted you at Rouen, and gave you my only companion to accompany you into Scotland, and upon your return I spared neither counsel nor help. I undertook with great peril of my life a hard and difficult journey into Spain, and on to Lisbon, and then one as difficult into Flanders, and a third to Rome itself. And all this, for the sake, after God, of the King of Scotland and his mother; for whom although I was not able to accomplish their wishes, I obtained from the King of Spain on two occasions the sum of twenty-four thousand crowns, and from the Pope Gregory XIII four thousand. I am unaware when anyone else has done the like good offices. I am obliged to mention these, in order to oppose those who make me out to be adversary of the King of Scotland. And no one can be better witness on my behalf than your Reverence, who knows all this, and can recall it.²⁰⁰

Watts crossed over the Scottish border on 26 August 1581, with instructions to approach James VI, Lennox, Lord Seton and the other Catholic nobles, to ask them for protection and asylum for the English Catholic fugitives, promising that those refugees would support James in his claim to the English throne.²⁰¹

Federico Eguiluz, following Leo Hicks, alleged that the instructions that the priest carried had been planned in the Spanish embassy in London. According to both of them, Mendoza had authorised Watts to promise that, once King James had converted

¹⁹⁷ Persons to Aquaviva, 21 Oct. 1581, printed in Hicks, *Letters and Memorials of Father Robert Persons*, pp. 107-15; this petition was obviously supported by Persons and it was solved favourably in October 1581. Eguiluz, *Persons*, p. 91

¹⁹⁸ *ibid.*, p. 89.

¹⁹⁹ *CSP Span.*, iii, pp. 171-2.

²⁰⁰ Persons to Crichton, from Seville, 10 May 1596. Tauton, *History of the Jesuits*, pp. 174-6.

²⁰¹ Eguiluz, *Persons*, p. 90; Tejón, 'The Embassy of Bernardino de Mendoza to England,' pp. 54-5.

to Catholicism, the Pope and Philip would support and finance a plan to liberate Mary Stewart from prison and declare James as heir to the English throne. In the contrary case, if James proved not to convert, the Catholics would oppose themselves to his interests more rigorously than the Protestants. If Mary was rescued, James would continue as king of Scotland, but would not be recognized as heir to the English throne; in essence the plan consisted of getting rid of Elizabeth and declaring Mary as queen of England.²⁰²

At the same time as Watts had left for Scotland, Persons had the intention of sending an Italian person (probably another Jesuit) to teach his language to James, and also introduce him to the principles of the Catholic faith.²⁰³ Persons was completely occupied with convincing the Society of Jesus to send a mission to Scotland. Thus, in the beginning of September, he wrote to Father Aquaviva iterating that the road to the subjection of England was through Scotland.²⁰⁴

Moreover, Mendoza had made sure, through his contacts in the borders of England with Scotland, that James VI would learn the advantages of paying obedience to the Catholic Church, among which were: its support for his succession to the throne of England, his mother's liberation, and the support of the Pope, the King of France and Philip II. Mendoza wrote in his dispatch to Philip on 7 September that:

y no parecerlos que las cosas de Irlanda podian servir para mas de embarazar a esta Reina y ocuparla de manera que no pudiese asistir a los Países-Bajos, poniéndola en necesidad de gente y dineros, pues dado que se redujese aquel Reino se habia de empezar desde él, por él de Escocia la guerra en este²⁰⁵

Mendoza knew, perhaps better than any other, that Philip needed encouragement to take action. Thus, he informed Philip, on a continuous basis, of new persecutions of Catholics in Scotland, trying to incite him with news such as how they had to pay £20 sterling each month for not attending the Protestant Church. Mendoza, a deep

²⁰² Hicks, *Letters and Memorials of Father Robert Persons*, p. xlii; Grant, 'The Brig o'Dee Affair,' in Goodare & Lynch, *The Reign of James VI*, p. 95.

²⁰³ Eguiluz, *Persons*, p. 91.

²⁰⁴ Rev. W. Forbes-Leith (ed.), *Narratives of Scottish Catholics* (London, 1889), pp. 166-74.

²⁰⁵ 'and [they] not thinking that the affairs of Ireland could serve for more than to keep this Queen [Elizabeth] busy, so that she could not aid the Low Countries, putting her in need of people and money; because in case of conversion of that kingdom [Scotland], the war in England should be started from there, from the [kingdom] of Scotland.' AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 7 Sept. 1581, E Leg. 835, fos. 107-8; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 106-9.

Catholic, was very concerned with the fact, that some of these Catholics, not able to pay, were forced to attend to the Protestant Church. Moreover, one of his priorities now was to make Philip see the urgent necessity for new seminaries where new missionaries for the cause could be produced.²⁰⁶

In the first week of October 1581, Watts returned from Scotland. He claimed that, after having been able to cross over to Scotland with the help of the people of the borders, he had met with Lennox; Hugh Montgomery, 4th earl of Eglinton; George Gordon, 6th earl of Huntly; George Sinclair, 4th earl of Caithness; Lord Seton and his older son – Alexander Seton, the prior of Pluscarden²⁰⁷ – with Patrick Lord Gray and Thomas Kerr of Ferneihurst. In that meeting, Watts asked them if they would admit priests and missionaries into the realm to preach to the King and to them. Moreover, he asked if it would be possible that the Scottish Parliament would order that the English Catholics, who had left England for religious reasons, could live freely in Scotland. He wanted to convince James VI that, by accepting them in the realm, he would gain their support in his candidacy for the English crown.

The response was brief: they would be welcome if they carried their own money to support themselves, however, they did not want to decide anything until they had thought longer about the matter. Watts declared that Lord Seton looked to have a very good and strong will for the proposal. Thus, he had told Seton that there was no better way to convert the King to the Catholic faith than with the missionaries, and that letting him know that the only way that he could unite the crowns of Scotland, England and Ireland would be through gaining the friendship of a great monarch such as Philip II.

After failing to gain the response that he had hoped from these Scottish nobles, Watts passed from Scotland into France, where he met with Allen and Persons, to inform them of his dealings in Scotland. Watts decided to spend several days in France where the three of them would choose the most suitable missionaries to be sent to Scotland.

²⁰⁶ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 7 Oct. 1581, E Leg. 835, fos. 50-2; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 144-9.

²⁰⁷ Alexander Seton, abandoned his religious studies in France to return to Scotland in 1577. *Scots Peerage*, iii, p. 369; it should be noted that Alexander Seton conformed to Protestantism in 1588, becoming earl of Winton in 1600, and later earl of Dunfermline and chancellor of Scotland. See M. Lee, 'King James's Popish Chancellor,' in Cowan & Shaw (eds.), *The Renaissance and Reformation in*

They decided on Persons and Father Gaspar Heywood, also a Jesuit, who had arrived in France from Germany a few days earlier.²⁰⁸

However, Mendoza did not think that it was a good idea to send Persons to Scotland on this mission because, knowing the organisational skills of the Jesuit, and though recognising that he was the most capable to carry out the affair, his departure would leave no one to guide the rest of the priests with these affairs.²⁰⁹ A few days later, Elizabeth sent Roger Ashton to Scotland to learn of the labours of the Jesuits there, and, according to Mendoza, to discredit Lennox before James, because of his ‘supposed meeting with Watts.’ Also, Mendoza declared that before Ashton returned, Elizabeth had sent another two people to Scotland with the same orders, but the King did not let them cross the borders of the realm.²¹⁰

Obviously, Mendoza wanted to keep Persons in England, not only for political reasons, but as an element of great utility when instructing the clergy of the mission under his orders.²¹¹ Mendoza knew that Persons was a vital asset for the Spanish plans. Nevertheless, the Jesuit, as a result of the meetings with Mendoza, was convinced that Spain could act as the key to opening the doors for Catholicism in England.

The General of the Society of Jesus decided that the Scottish mission should be left in the hands of Beaton and Persons. Thus, Aquaviva sent Crichton to Rouen to interview Persons. After discussing the plans, they went to Eu, near Dieppe, to talk with Guise about the Catholic cause in England and Scotland, and about the liberation of Mary Stewart.²¹²

Scotland (Edinburgh, 1983).

²⁰⁸ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 7 Oct. 1581, E Leg. 835, fos. 50-2; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 144-9.

²⁰⁹ ‘To govern the priests that are in the kingdom, distributing them in the parts where they are more necessary and guide much business...for these reasons it would be good that Gaspar [Father Heywood] with other two priests, persons of letters, would be chosen, and that Persons took care here until His Holiness would give advice.’ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 7 Oct. 1581, E Leg. 835, fos. 50-2; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 144-9.

²¹⁰ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 20 Nov. 1581, E Leg. 835, fo. 141; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 190-1.

²¹¹ However, Meyer affirmed that ‘as desirable, not from political reasons, such as espionage or stirring up sedition, but only for the oversight of the scattered clergy and for ministering to souls.’ Meyer, *England and the Catholic Church*, p. 198.

²¹² Eguiluz, *Persons*, p. 93.

A wide door was apparently opened: Mary, herself, earnestly desired that someone should be sent to promote the cause of the Catholic religion among her supporters; and she believed that her son, now a fifteen year old youth, might easily be brought to a receptive form of mind through d'Aubigny. She entreated Persons in a message sent by letter to Mendoza, to undertake overseeing the direction of the province, and not to waste his time writing books, when the salvation of a kingdom was at stake.²¹³ But on 11 December of that same year, Mendoza wrote to Philip stating:

aunque he escrito a V[uestra] M[ajestad], que habíamos resuelto fuese en Escocia al negocio el padre Gaspar de la Compañía de Jesús y quedase aquí el Persons para asistir a los católicos del Reino, por haber ocurrido despues estar malo de ceática el Gaspar, y Personio ser declarado rebelde de esta Reina, ha sido causa de alterar lo resuelto, no pudiendo volver a este Reino el Personio, aunque estaba a la legua del agua para hacello sin evidente peligro y ninguna esperanza de hacer el fruto que antes habiendo de incurrir cuantos le comunicasen y alojasen en caso de mayor traición, y así hemos juzgado las personas con quien yo trato estas materias, que el Gaspar asista aquí, a quien Dios da gracias que reduzca muchas almas y que el Personio parta, pues se halla en Francia.²¹⁴

In the end, both Jesuits went to Scotland, from where they reported to Mendoza that they had been welcomed to the realm with an audience attended by James VI, arranged by Sir Thomas Kerr of Ferniehurst. Thus, they declared that the king had 'said that although for certain reasons it was advisable for him to appear publicly in favour of the French, he assured him that in his heart he would rather be Spanish.'²¹⁵ They also affirmed to Mendoza that James had assured them that he would declare his Catholicism in the Parliament before next Christmas. Immediately, Mendoza forwarded this information to Philip II.²¹⁶

It is most likely that James did not make such a direct statement, but was appearing to appease all sides in order to ascertain with whom it would suit his interests most to ally himself. It is even more probable that the missionaries were reporting this to

²¹³ Forbes-Leith, *Narratives*, p. 181.

²¹⁴ 'despite that I have written to Your Highness, that we had resolved that Father Gaspar [Heywood] of the Company of Jesus would go to Scotland and [Father Robert] Persons would stay here to attend the Catholics of the kingdom, because it has happened that Gaspar has suffered back pains and Persons has been declared rebel by the Queen, it has been altered what was resolved. Persons not being able to come back to this kingdom, although he was one league [measure equivalent to 5196 metres] from water, [and] to do it without evident danger and no hope of producing any fruit before committed to those who communicate with him or give him asylum in case of high treason, and in this way we, I and the people with whom I discuss these matters, have decided that Gaspar would assist here, who has God's grace for rescuing many souls and that Persons [should] go, because he is [already] in France.' AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 11 Dec. 1581, E Leg. 835, fos. 196-7; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 205-9.

²¹⁵ *CSP Span.*, iii, pp. 196, 234, 238.

²¹⁶ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 11 Dec. 1581, E Leg. 835, fos. 196-7; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 205-9.

heighten Philip II's interest in the realm, since a very significant portion of the mission's funding came from Spain. Thomas Graves claimed that although 'James interviewed by these agents secretly and professed to favour Spain, but gave no real ground for hope of his conversion, and avowedly schismatic'.²¹⁷

On 18 December 1581, Philip sent two dispatches from Lisbon to Mendoza, with clear instructions concerning Scotland. He ordered his ambassador to reassure and aid the Catholics, to open a door of understanding in Scotland. With regards to Mary, his commands were to congratulate her about the intended association with her son, and at the same time reminding her that if they finally decided to collaborate with Spain, he would support them.²¹⁸ He affirmed that he was happy about the hospitable welcome that had been given to the priests, and approved everything that had been done so far by the ambassador concerning Persons and Gaspar Heywood. He was so moved by the warm welcome that they had received that he sent 2,000 crowns as funding for the Jesuit Fathers William Holt and Crichton, who were to go to Scotland.²¹⁹

The first mention of Holt and Crichton's presence in Scotland was on 24 January 1582,²²⁰ and only four days later, Philip II wrote to Mendoza assuring: 'Heme holgado mucho de ver que los clérigos que fueron a Escocia ayan hablado con el Rey, y les hiziesse tan buen acogimiento.'²²¹

Philip had just received a dispatch from Mendoza reporting that he had recently received letters from the missionaries in Scotland reporting the warm welcome they had received and the increasingly large number of Catholics in the realm. Subsequently, they claimed that more missionaries were desired in Scotland.²²² It is clear that this information was over-optimistic and was designed to secure Spanish

²¹⁷ Brown, *Collected Essays and Reviews*, p. 229.

²¹⁸ Philip II to Mendoza, from Lisbon, 19 Dec. 1581. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 233-4.

²¹⁹ Mendoza claimed that the bad relations between Lennox and Arran had delayed the departure of the two Jesuits. AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 27 Jan. 1581, E Leg. 836, fo. 27; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 259-60; *CSP Span.*, iii, p. 242.

²²⁰ *Edin. Recs.*, iii, p. 229.

²²¹ 'I have been very happy to see that the priests that went to Scotland [Holt and Crichton] had talked with the King [of Scotland], and that he gave them such a good welcome.' Philip II to Mendoza, from Lisbon, 28 Jan. 1582. Teulet, *Relations*, v, p. 234.

²²² AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 17 Jan. 1581, E Leg. 836, fo. 17; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 242-3.

support. A religious mission to Scotland was an almost irresistible modern crusade for the Spanish monarch. Philip had already been planning to send more missionaries through France and England, that once there, they would pass to Scotland to preach. Moreover, he promised that the 2,000 crowns given to Holt and Crichton were only the first of more payments; but he had also confessed that the funding would depend of the results.²²³ Nevertheless, Philip knew that he would also need to gain the favour of the nobility, even of those who were not Catholics, but dissidents. Thus, he commanded Mendoza to let Holt and Crichton know that more ‘gifts,’ as well as pensions, would be sent to gain the favour of the principal men of Scotland. Finally, the Spanish monarch asked Mendoza to compile a list of nobles and how much money should be given to each one.²²⁴

In the meantime, rumours saying that Holt had left Scotland through the port of Leith had spread to France and Germany, and by the end of January 1582, even news of his death had reached Mendoza.²²⁵ However, Holt and Crichton had decided to stay in Scotland, and had gone to the north of the realm, with the consent of the northern lords. Once there, they met with Watts, who informed them of his journey from the borders to Edinburgh, where he had been received by Lennox, Huntly, Argyll, the Setons – George and his son, Alexander, – and Hamilton, in whose house they took asylum and celebrated mass on Christmas day and on the Epiphany. According to Crichton, they had assured him that the only reason for James’s Protestantism was his education, and that with some preaching and ‘good guidance’ he would convert.²²⁶

Watts ordered Holt to travel to London to pass on information about the Scottish nobles that supported the Catholic cause.²²⁷ Holt was very surprised when he found out that the recipient of this intelligence was going to be Mendoza. Quite probably, this information was to refresh the list of candidates for pensions.²²⁸ On 9 February

²²³ AGS, Philip II to Mendoza, from Lisbon, without date, E Leg. 835, fos. 29-30; *CODOIN*, xci, pp. 569-71.

²²⁴ AGS, Philip II to Mendoza, from Lisbon, without date, E Leg. 835, fos. 29-30; *CODOIN*, xci, pp. 569-71.

²²⁵ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 9 Feb. 1582, E Leg. 836, fos. 39-42; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 272-7.

²²⁶ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 9 Feb. 1582, E Leg. 836, fos. 39-42; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 272-7.

²²⁷ Eguiluz, *Persons*, p. 98.

²²⁸ AGS, ‘Misión del Jesuita Guillermo Holt que vino de Escocia a dar cuenta del estado de la religión y de la conveniencia de sacar de allí al Rey Hacobó que ya estaba contaminado con la herejía,’ E Legs. 836-7.

1582, Mendoza wrote to Philip about this interview with Holt. The Jesuit had informed the ambassador of his meeting with the Scottish nobles. Mendoza commented how these people asked for 2,000 soldiers, preferably Italians, paid by Philip, but under the name of the Pope, in order not to raise the suspicions of France. They had even offered the port of Eyemouth for a possible landing. Holt had claimed that the Catholic nobles had declared their loyalty to Mary and had promised to assist her if it was to prove necessary to take control over the country, and that they would dispose of James.²²⁹ The credibility of these claims was very dubious and demonstrated how ill-informed on Scottish politics the Jesuits often were since, for example, Lennox was to become James's favourite, and not that of Mary.

Nevertheless, Mendoza listened and sent him back again to England with instructions to go to visit Mary, and inform her of his labours in Scotland.²³⁰ Immediately, Mendoza wrote to Mary and to Philip, at the same time as Holt wrote to Allen, who subsequently sent a complete report to Rome.²³¹

Allen's letter was a statement of the present condition of the kingdom of Scotland²³² to Cardinal Como. In the letter sent from London on 8 February 1582, it was stated that:

Many of the nobility are inclined towards the Catholic cause, and are anxious for the restoration of our Catholic religion in their country...At present, they are of the opinion that, owing to the peculiar situation of England and Scotland, foreign alliances would be rather a source of danger, unless supported by armed forces from abroad; while from the King of France, they have no expectation that they would obtain any assistance. They would seek this willingly from the Supreme Pontiff, or from the King of Spain, were there any chance of its being granted...The principal supporters and agents of the King of Spain are the Duke of Lennox, the Earl of Huntly, the Earl of Eglinton, the Earl of Argyll, the Earl of Caithness, Lord Home, and Lord Seton, with some other men of high position...In the opinion of the Scots themselves, the most convenient course to take would be that the King of Spain should send an envoy to the King of Scotland on some other pretext, but accompanied by men of learning and zeal for the faith. These persons would thus be able to reside near the Court, and would have an opportunity of suggesting arguments to the King and to the courtiers in favour of the Catholic faith, as well as the steps to be taken for its promotion. They might even propose a marriage between the King and the daughter of the King of Spain, if his Catholic

²²⁹ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 9 Feb. 1582, E Leg. 836, fos. 39-42; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 272-7; T.G. Law, *Catholic Tractates of the Sixteenth Century, 1573-1600* (Edinburgh, 1901), pp. xviii-xix.

²³⁰ *CPS Span.*, iii, p. 288.

²³¹ Hicks, *Letters and Memorials of Father Robert Persons*, pp. l-li.

²³² According to L. Hicks, 'Allen believed in dispossessing Queen Elizabeth of the English crown, and this time he maintained the idea that James VI could be the Catholic king whom they were hoping for, but he would abandon this idea after the adhesion of the King to the Protestant religion.' Hicks, *Letters and Memorials of Father Robert Persons*, p. lxi.

Majesty approved this project; but of this the Scots entertain very little hope, on account of the poverty of their own sovereign.²³³

The greatest chance for the mission appeared when, on 7 March, 1582, Esmé Stewart was created duke of Lennox, thus becoming the favourite of the youthful King James.²³⁴ At the time he controlled the chief ports of Scotland, and enjoyed James's entire confidence. The consolidation of Lennox's power opened the doors for the realisation of the project that was always associated with his name: James's conversion to Catholicism and the Catholic evangelisation of Scotland. The Jesuits were the first ones to take the initiative with the Pope and Philip II trying to remain discreet, by keeping a more remote position, although the English intelligence officers were following them closely.²³⁵ Meanwhile, Elizabeth had sent Robert Bowes to Scotland to try to counter the influence of Lennox on the King and defend him from the intrigues of the Jesuits in the Scottish court.

Since Mendoza's interview with Holt at the beginning of February, there had been a discussion in Spain and Rome about who should next be sent on the mission. Initially, it was decided that Crichton should be the first to return to Scotland to observe the situation; and he would subsequently be followed by Father Edmund Hay. For some time, the name of Father Gaspar Heywood was also mentioned for this task, but he was appointed by Persons to direct the mission in England,²³⁶ as that Crichton and Holt were once again to return to Scotland. Crichton had orders to establish communication with the newly appointed duke of Lennox and procure the conversion through lecture or James's deposition. Holt would send reports about the developments of their work to Mary and to Philip through Mendoza; and on his return, he was to have an interview with Guise. In May 1582, there was going to be a meeting where all of them – Jesuits, ambassadors and nobles – would be able to discuss the tactics to be used in this crusade.²³⁷

It is likely that the decision to send Crichton was motivated by differences of opinion among those who thought that the priests for this mission should be English. Mendoza

²³³ Forbes-Leith, *Narratives*, pp. 175-8.

²³⁴ BL, 'Threatise in support of the duke of Lennox,' 1582-3, Add. MS 48,049, fos. 129-32b.

²³⁵ See for example BL, letter by Mr. Doddington, Lansdowne MS 37.

²³⁶ Eguiluz, *Persons*, p. 98.

²³⁷ *ibid.*, p. 92.

claimed that missionaries should be English, because the Scots themselves had asked for that; also, because it would be much easier for them to pass over the frontier.²³⁸ On the other hand, Mary thought that it would be better if they were natives of the country, because the English were not very popular in Scotland, even less so among the lower classes.²³⁹ What Mary wanted was that Beaton would be asked to carry with him some Scottish theologians, who would obviously be loyal to her. Thus, the Pope and the General of the Company of Jesus commanded Beaton to send Crichton, a Scot. Beaton confessed in a letter to Cardinal Como, dated 26 May 1582, that he was responsible for the sending of Crichton, but it had already been decided that Crichton was destined to this by the General of the Company, which was confirmed by Mendoza.²⁴⁰ However, Hay was also appointed for the mission. Thus, the choice of Crichton and Hay to return to Scotland was a compromise.

Both Jesuits crossed the Scottish frontier at the beginning March 1582.²⁴¹ Persons commented:

F[ather] Edw [Edmund] Hayers [Hay] and F[ather] W[illia]m Critton [Crichton] were appointed, but first to take direction from me: wherefore upon conference with F[ather] Critton at Roan, he went into Scotland and I sent Rafe Emerson with him and promised to expect his return at Roan as I did.²⁴²

Mary had given a letter to Mendoza to be forwarded to Lennox. Moreover, Mendoza also sent a letter himself, in Latin, to Lennox together with Mary's letter, in which he corroborated Philip's good intention. The chosen bearer was Holt, whom Mendoza met in London on the night of the 5 March.²⁴³ He had already advised Holt to talk firstly with Lord Seton, and only afterwards, to go and see Lennox. The Spanish

²³⁸ T.G. Law explained: 'the Scottish nobles, too, had invited Parsons to Scotland, feeling, as Parsons himself felt, that Englishmen would be safer there, because less amenable to the penal laws.' T.G. Law, *A Historical Sketch of the Conflicts between Jesuits and Seculars in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth* (London, 1889), p. xxi; obviously, Persons had forwarded their petition to Mendoza. AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 9 Feb. 1582, E Leg. 835, fos. 46-9; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 277-85.

²³⁹ M.A. Bald, 'Contemporary References to the Scottish Speech of the Sixteenth Century,' *SHR*, xxv (1928), p. 166.

²⁴⁰ *CSP Span.*, iii, p. 349

²⁴¹ Hicks also claimed that Tassis believed that the election of Crichton had been a decision taken by the Pope's nuncio and James Beaton. Tassis to Philip II, from Paris, 18 May 1582. Hicks, *Letters and Memorials of Father Robert Persons*, p. xlix; *CSP Span.*, iii, p. 370.

²⁴² Autobiographic notes from Persons collected in the Stonyhurst MSS in Knox, *Letters and Memorials of Cardinal Allen*, ii, p. 229,

²⁴³ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 19 Mar. 1582, E Leg. 863, fo. 81; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 318-21.

ambassador gave him some money for the trip as to enable him to live and travel in Scotland.²⁴⁴

Holt entered Scotland on 6 March 1582. Immediately, he made contact with Lennox, the Catholic nobles and dissidents, to whom he communicated the news, which he certainly exaggerated and portrayed optimistically, of the favourable disposition of the Pope and Philip II to help James VI to create the union of the crowns of England, Ireland and Scotland in his name.²⁴⁵ Without losing time, Holt wrote to Mendoza declaring how warm the welcome he had received in Scotland had been.²⁴⁶

Lennox replied to Mary only a few days later, on 7 March 1582, with a letter signed as ‘Vostre tres humble et tres obeissant et tres fidele serviteur a jamais.’ Lennox confirmed that he had had a meeting with a Jesuit and that he had received a letter from Mendoza concerning the plan, which he approved.²⁴⁷ The plan involved the combined aid of the Pope and Philip II to succour Mary with an army for the purpose of re-establishing the Catholic religion on the island. ‘He [Holt] says it is proposed that I [Lennox] should be the head of the said army...I promise you on my life that when I have the army which is promised me of 15,000 men...I will land. Courage! then, your Majesty.’²⁴⁸

This same day, Lennox wrote from Dalkeith to Tassis, a letter which was later carried by Crichton. In the said letter, Lennox explained how he had met with Crichton and Holt, who had told him that they carried credentials of Philip II and the Pope, as part of Holt’s letter, given to him by Mendoza from Mary. During their interview, they had talked about the restoration of the Catholic faith in the realm and the liberation of the Scottish Queen. D’Aubigny’s statement in the letter was very clear:

estoy aparejado de emplear mi vida y hazienda para la execucion de la dicha empresa, con que se me provean todas aquellas cosas que van puestas en un memorial que he dado al portador desta para que os le comunique.²⁴⁹

²⁴⁴ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 9 Feb. 1582, E Leg. 835, fos. 46-9; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 277-85.

²⁴⁵ Eguiluz, *Persons*, p. 92.

²⁴⁶ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 19 Mar. 1582, E Leg. 863, fo. 81; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 318-21.

²⁴⁷ Lennox, to Mary Stewart, 7 Mar. 1582. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 236-8.

²⁴⁸ *CSP Span.*, iii, p. 333.

²⁴⁹ ‘I am disposed to employ my life and possessions for the execution of the said enterprise, if I am provided with all those things that are mentioned in a memorial that I have given to the bearer of this [letter] to be communicated it to you.’ Lennox to Tassis, 7 Mar. 1582. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 235-6.

On the night of 25 March, a missionary from Scotland arrived at the Spanish embassy in London. The missionary, probably Crichton, who had left Edinburgh on 12 March, had walked most of the three hundred miles that separate Edinburgh from London.²⁵⁰ He carried two letters. One, Lennox's response to Mendoza; the other, a report on the state of Scotland from Holt and Crichton.

In his letter to the Spanish ambassador, Lennox declared that, even though he was French, Mendoza should not be afraid of him. Thus, Lennox asked him to continue their correspondence using the same secret cipher that Holt and Crichton had given him, which they used when writing to Mendoza. Without delay, Mendoza wrote to Mary asking her to write as soon as possible to Beaton, ordering him to send two dispatches, one to Alexander Seton to go to report these affairs to the Pope; and another to John Seton asking him to go to Philip II. Without more ado, Crichton left for Rouen, where he was going to meet Persons and collect the money that Mendoza had sent from Spain at the beginning of March to Persons, for the Scottish mission.²⁵¹ Mendoza was supposed to travel with him, but being unable to go, he suggested to Mary that Beaton should travel from Paris to Rouen to meet them. On 1 April 1582, he declared that the reason behind this movement was 'porque la Reina virtualmente gobierna todas estas materias y no querer los de Escocia continuarlas sin su parecer y orden.'²⁵²

Moreover, Mary was angry because the Jesuits were acting in France in her name and without her authority.²⁵³ She had asked Castelnau, the French ambassador in London, to talk with Elizabeth on her behalf, to obtain a licence for the purpose of sending an envoy to Scotland to inform James that she was willing to pass on her rights and powers to him. Elizabeth did not grant the licence,²⁵⁴ but the damage was already

²⁵⁰ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 1 Apr. 1582, E Leg. 836, fo. 85; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 324-6.

²⁵¹ The reference to the money sent to Persons was made in the letter AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 19 Mar. 1582, E Leg. 863, fo. 81; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 318-21; see also 'Cifra del nuncio di Francia, 22 Maggio 1582,' printed in Knox, *Records*, i, pp. 337-9.

²⁵² 'Because the Queen virtually governs all these matters and [because] the Scots do not want to continue them without her opinion and order.' AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 1 Apr. 1582, E Leg. 836, fo. 85; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 324-6.

²⁵³ Hume, *Espanoles e Ingleses*, p.158.

²⁵⁴ Mendoza claimed that the reason that Elizabeth had not given the licence was that 'she replied that she would not give the licence until the Scot [James VI] would satisfy her for not having wanted to give a passport to a gentleman that she had sent to him in the times of the [Scottish] Parliament.' AGS,

done. Philip knew that it was necessary to remove the missionaries from France to please Mary and send them on to Scotland to work on the conversion of the young King. Philip sent money to France for Crichton's journey back to Scotland.²⁵⁵

In Rouen, Crichton also met with his old companion, Holt, who would accompany him once again on their 'conversional' labour in Scotland.²⁵⁶ They crossed the Scottish frontier on 19 April,²⁵⁷ and by 26 April, Mendoza had already received a letter from Crichton and Holt, reporting that Lennox and the others would not collaborate in the enterprise without Mary's approval.²⁵⁸ Nevertheless, Mary had her own plans for Scotland. She had planned that at the same time as she was trying to convert her son through books and priests, promising him that if he became Catholic, the Pope should give him monetary support, Mendoza should gain collaborators in Scotland through pensions, in the hope that very soon the peace would come in Flanders and the mercenaries there could be sent for the enterprise against England.²⁵⁹ Thanks to Holt and Crichton's reports Mendoza had been able to finally compose the list of the possible beneficiaries of pensions that Philip had requested of him at the end of 1581.²⁶⁰ Mendoza wrote that he was considering the house of 'Habart,' in the North of Scotland, that was headed by the earl of Arran. The ambassador assured Philip that with a pension, they would not look to France anymore.²⁶¹ It is quite probable that Mendoza meant the 'Hamiltons,' who were still claiming their rights to the title of earls of Arran, after in April 1581, James Bothwellmure – son of Lord Ochiltree and brother-in-law of John Knox – was advanced to the earldom.²⁶² Ruined and forfeited, it is possible that they would be quite disposed to work for Spain.

However, there were several obstacles: Lennox had started to be suspicious of his contacts with the earl of Arran, and was starting to doubt the promises of help from

Mendoza to Philip II, 11 Apr. 1582, E Leg. 836, fo. 97; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 338-40.

²⁵⁵ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 1 Apr. 1582, E Leg. 836, fo. 85; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 324-6.

²⁵⁶ Philip II to Mendoza, 23 Apr. 1582. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 238-42.

²⁵⁷ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 4 May 1582, E Leg. 836, fo. 121; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 368-9.

²⁵⁸ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 26 Apr. 1582, E Leg. 836, fo. 115, fos. 116-7; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 359-63.

²⁵⁹ Philip II to Mendoza, 23 Apr. 1582. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 238-42.

²⁶⁰ AGS, Philip II to Mendoza, from Lisbon, Mar. 1582, E Leg. 835, fos. 29-30; *CODOIN*, xci, pp. 569-71.

²⁶¹ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 6 Mar. 1582, E Leg. 836, fo. 64; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 304-6.

²⁶² Donaldson, *All the Queen's men*, p. 134.

Philip II and the Pope.²⁶³ Moreover, Philip had made clear that the conversion strategy was probably the more moderate, but also the more secure, because the other three were too risky; a coup d'état would cost too much blood; to depose James of the crown would go against the noblemen's prior oaths of allegiance; and to carry him out of the country did not guarantee his conversion.²⁶⁴ Nevertheless, Mary did not abandon her plan, and on 22 April, sent a servant of William Douglas, 9th earl of Angus, to the frontier of Scotland with some money and jewellery in order to buy people for a rebellion in the Northern parts.²⁶⁵

At this same time, Crichton arrived in Normandy; he had left Scotland by Beaton's order. He had to report to the archbishop about his meeting with Lennox and his disposition to collaborate in the enterprise.²⁶⁶ Mendoza was perplexed when he was informed that Crichton and Holt, during their interview with Lennox, had promised the duke, in the name of Philip II and the Pope, 15,000 soldiers for Scotland.²⁶⁷ Mendoza did not know where the offer had come from. Crichton had promised money and men in Philip's name without consulting him. Following Philip's commands that came in a letter from Setubal, in Portugal, dated 23 April,²⁶⁸ Mendoza, without wasting time, wrote a very unspecific response to Lennox, which gave the following explanation:

porque le sirva de desengaño de haber sido sin ningun fundamento y encendiendole con la gloria y grandeza que puede esperar desta empresa, habiendose de atribuir a el solo que era tan digno de un personaje de sus prendas.²⁶⁹

Meanwhile in France, Crichton, carrying letters to the Pope, Guise and Tassis, had met with Persons. According to Persons, Crichton had carried with him a reply from Lennox, already governor of Scotland and another from James VI, for the contentment of Guise with whom Persons had had a previous meeting in his house at

²⁶³ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 1 Apr. 1582, E Leg. 836, fo. 85; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 324-6.

²⁶⁴ Philip II to Mendoza, 23 Apr. 1582. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 238-42.

²⁶⁵ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 26 Apr. 1582, E Leg. 836, fos. 115-7; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 359-3.

²⁶⁶ Guilday, *The English Catholic Refugees*, p. 71n.

²⁶⁷ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 26 Apr. 1582, E Leg. 836, fos. 115-7; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 359-3.

²⁶⁸ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 15 May 1582, E Leg. 836, fos. 124-5; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 375-9.

²⁶⁹ 'to undeceive him of have being [promised] without any foundation and turning him on with the glory and greatness that he can get of this enterprise, having to be attributed to only him who was such worthy of a personage of his pledges.' AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 26 Apr. 1582, E Leg. 836, fos. 115-7; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 359-3.

Eu to discuss the problems affecting the Catholic cause in England and Scotland, as well as Mary's liberation.²⁷⁰

During their meeting Crichton assured Persons that Lennox was resolved to convert the King, however, it would be necessary for Philip II and the Pope to pay for 8,000 soldiers for six to eight months, and weapons to arm a similar number of Scots. This was all needed by September or October, before the coming of winter.²⁷¹ Only then, after Persons had received this information, were Beaton, Guise and Allen informed; and only afterwards, Beaton informed Tassis and the nuncio in Paris.²⁷² Crichton convinced Persons to go to Scotland, which Persons had already planned.²⁷³ However, beforehand, both Jesuits went to inform Guise of the good prospects, as had been previously planned.²⁷⁴ Guise came proposing new plans, with the obvious intention of promoting the sending of Spanish troops to the Isle. Guise even claimed that he would give all his possessions for the enterprise and, if necessary, his life. Allen wrote to Mendoza informing that Guise and Angus, had decided that Persons should go to visit Lennox, and Crichton should go to the Pope. Both would carry letters with a plan: while 4,000 men would pass from Scotland to Sussex to entertain the English, Philip II and the Pope would send 10,000 crowns to fortify the port and castles of Dumbarton and Edinburgh, and to reinforce James's guard.²⁷⁵

Mendoza's dislike for the plan, after receiving the news of the meeting in Paris, was great. On 15 May 1582, the Spanish ambassador wrote to Philip:

Yo trato solo el desear V[uestra] M[ajestad] la conversion destos Reinos sin descender a otro individuo, y si bien debajo desto hago cuanto es en mi para encaminar los negocios en la manera que V[uestra] M[ajestad] es servido mandarme y conviene, que se que no es en mi mano el evitar millares de inconvenientes que ocurren, porque como intvi desde el principio representando a V[uestra] M[ajestad] que como se urdiesen aqui era fuerza tejerlos en Francia y no entredellos, por lo que ha escrito la Reina de Escocia, el Ministro que V[uestra] M[ajestad] tiene alli, los Religiosos que es fuerza que los manegen con intencion de los demas que estan en Francia la encaminan por diferente via que la de Escocia apunta, y no querria llevar, y assi fuera de la promesa sin termino que escribi a V[uestra] M[ajestad] que habia

²⁷⁰ Mendoza claimed in a letter to Philip II that he had written to Allen and Persons, asking them to go to Scotland, 'as we had agreed, with the money that I had sent for this.' AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 26 Apr. 1582, E Leg. 836, fos. 115-7; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 359-3; see also Rev. W.J. Anderson, 'Narratives of the Scottish Reformation,' *IR*, vii (1956), p. 120.

²⁷¹ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 15 May 1582, E Leg. 836, fos. 124-5; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 375-9.

²⁷² Eguiluz, *Persons*, p. 99.

²⁷³ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 26 Apr. 1582, E Leg. 836, fos. 115-7; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 359-3.

²⁷⁴ Eguiluz, *Persons*, p. 90.

²⁷⁵ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 15 May 1582, E Leg. 836, fos. 124-5; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 375-9.

hecho el Padre Criton al Duque de Lenos, han alterado de nuevo la orden que yo tenia dada del entretenerse en Escocia y que el Padre Personio pasase a ella para atender con predicion y lectura a la conversion del Rey.²⁷⁶

Mendoza was certainly hurt because all of his elaborate strategies were being destroyed in France, far from his reach. His plans and, obviously those of Philip, were being undermined because of this evident lack of coordination. He continued:

Habiendo llegado a Francia los Padres Guillermo Criton y Hold a los 14 del pasado, los cuales hicieron entretener al Personio que estaba de camino y despues de haber comunicado su comision con el Obispo Douglas, Embajador de la Escocia, abocadose con el Duque de Guisa, hallandose presente el dicho Embajador, el Padre Roberto, el Doctor Alano, Personio y el Criton que refirio el estado que estaba lo de Escocia y cuan inclinada la gente para la reduction, dijo que el Duque de Lenos se resolvio de convertir aquel Reino y persona del Rey si V[uestra] M[ajestad] y el Papa le socorrian con 8.000 soldados extranjeros pagados por sies u ocho meses, enviando asimismo con ellos cantidad de armas de todas suertes con que poder armar otro tanto numero de escoceses, y que con esta gente, despues de convertirdo aquel Reino que seria al momento que pusiesen los soldados pie en el, caminaria el Rey la vuelta deste, donde se juntarian los catolicos y pondria a su madre en libertad, reduciendo a Inglaterra a la obediencia de la Sede Apostolica.²⁷⁷

The other Spanish ambassador involved in the Scottish affairs, Tassis, informed Philip, on 18 May 1582, that two or three days prior two Jesuits, one Scottish one English – Crichton and Persons – had gone to see him. They carried a letter from Lennox, supposedly the same one that Crichton had carried to France some weeks before, assuring his commitment to the enterprise, but only if Philip and the Pope would send troops. His request was for 20,000 men, Spaniards, Italians, Germans and

²⁷⁶ ‘Your Majesty, I only try to wish the conversion of these kingdoms without descending another individual, and indeed under this [premise] I do everything what it is in my [hand] to guide the business in the way that Your Majesty is served to order me and that is convenient, that it is not in my hand to avoid the thousands of inconveniences that happen, because as I intuited since the beginning presenting to Your Majesty how things were planned here, it was necessary to develop them in France, and not among them [the Scots], following what it is written by the Queen of Scots, the Minister that Your Majesty has there and the Fathers, that it is necessary to manage them with the intention of the others who are in France they guide it in a different way from which the one of Scotland [Mary Queen of Scots] pointed, and I would not like to carry, and so apart of the promise without end that I wrote about to Your Majesty that the Father Crichton had done to the duke of Lennox, have altered again the order that I have given to entertain in Scotland and that Father Persons would go to her [Scotland] to attend with prediction and lecture the conversion of the King.’ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 15 May 1582, E Leg. 836, fos. 124-5.

²⁷⁷ ‘Having arrived to France the Fathers William Crichton and Holt on the 14th of the past, who met Father Persons, who was in his way, and after having commented their commission with the bishop Douglas, ambassador of the Scottish Queen, talked with the duke of Guise, being present the said ambassador, Father Roberts, Doctor Allen, Persons and Crichton, who referred to the situation of Scotland and how many people were ready for the reduction. He [Persons?] said that the duke of Lennox has resolved to convert that kingdom and person of the King [of Scotland] if Your Majesty and the Pope would give him 8,000 foreign soldiers paid for six to eight months, sending in the same way with them a quantity of weapons with which he would be able to arm such a number of Scots, and with that people, after converting that kingdom that it would be as soon as the soldiers stand up with him, and would walk to the King, the Catholics would unite and would put his mother free, reducing England to the obedience of the Apostolic See.’ AGS, Mendoza, 15 May 1582, E Leg. 836, fos. 124-5.

Swiss, paid for eight to ten months and who should be in Scotland by the following autumn. Lennox also wanted money to buy a rebellion in the north, and around 20,000 crowns to fortify the castles of the realm. But he was more interested in assuring that if the enterprise failed and he lost his possessions, Philip and the Pope would compensate him. Finally, the missionaries advised Tassis that Guise, Beaton and Allen, would meet very soon to discuss the issue.²⁷⁸

The English agents were already informing Elizabeth that ‘we heare of greate and dayly preparation for the sea in Naples, Spayne and Portugall.’²⁷⁹ However, Philip frankly did not approve the proposed plans and no troops had been mobilised. He informed Tassis that he would not take part in any plot against the thrones of France or England. Philip’s first instinct was always to choose peace rather than conflict.²⁸⁰ Philip felt the necessity of removing Guise from any active participation in his plans for the enterprise, feeding him sweet words and fomenting his ambitions in France. It was clear that Guise had acted in a very imprudent way, something that the Spanish sovereign could not afford if he wanted to carry out the enterprise.²⁸¹

Nevertheless, a conference was convoked in Paris, on 18 to 25 May 1582, to discuss the strategy to be followed in Scotland, which was attended by Beaton, Guise, Allen, Crichton and Mathieu. Notably the following were missing: a Spanish representative, which suggests that Philip was not very satisfied with these plans. The other, Persons, who did not go to the conference, probably because he was planning to leave for Scotland. However, he travelled to Paris just a few days after the conference had commenced.²⁸²

The main theme of the conferences was Lennox’s military plans, and how to gain the cooperation of Philip II and the Pope for them. Thus, what came out of the conference was the decision to send Crichton and Persons to travel to Rome and Madrid

²⁷⁸ Tassis to Philip II, from Paris, 18 May 1582. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 244-51.

²⁷⁹ BL, ‘Mr M. Parry from Venice, 4 Mar. [or May] 1582, to the right honorable the L. Burghley Lorde high Threasurer of Englande,’ 4 May 1582, Lansdowne MS 37, fos. 67b-68.

²⁸⁰ BNM, Philip II to Tassis, May 1582, MS 2751, fo. 478; H. Kamen, *Philip of Spain*, p. 253.

²⁸¹ Hume, *Españoles e Ingleses*, pp. 158-9.

²⁸² Knox, *Letters and Memorials of Cardinal Allen*, ii, p. xxxv.

respectively, to gain audiences with the Pope and Philip II, and ask for their support for their enterprise.²⁸³

The memorial, offering the opinion and plans of the group that gathered in Paris, was obviously inspired by Persons's beliefs. The document was not in Persons handwriting, but it seemed clear that the ideas expressed in the document were his.²⁸⁴

Written in Paris on 22 May 1582, it starts like this:

Il fine chi se pretende in questa impresa.

Noi non pretendiamo altro in questo disegno se non la restituiione della fede catholica in tutti li duoi regnid'Inghilterra et Scotia, la liberatione della regina di Scotia fuori di prigione, la conservatione della vita et dell'anima del giovane re di Scotia dall'insidie delli heretici et dalla confirmatione in heresia, la liberatione delli catholici affitti et perseguitati per la fede in Inghilterra et altri luoghi, et finalmente la reedificatione della chiesa d'Iddio in quelle bande.²⁸⁵

After this introduction, the following chapter was titled *Fundamenti et commodita dalla parte di Scotia*.²⁸⁶ It analysed the disposition of the people in Scotland to the plan, which proved favourable; the personality of the young king of Scotland, who they believed would be easily converted; and Lennox's influence on him, at the same time he was also devoted to the plan, as were the powerful lords of the realm; the fact that there were secure ports in Scotland for the landing of a foreign army, which would be amicably received,²⁸⁷ and would be shown the way to England.²⁸⁸

*La dispositione dell'Inghilterra per questa impresa*²⁸⁹ was the title of the subsequent chapter that had eleven points, narrating that, apart from the Catholics, there were many heretics who were doubtful or indifferent and would support the enterprise if they saw that it had a solid foundation. Commenting that there already was an

²⁸³ Law, *A Historical Sketch of the Conflicts between Jesuits and Seculars*, p. xvi.

²⁸⁴ Eguiluz, *Persons*, p. 100.

²⁸⁵ 'The goal that it is aimed in this enterprise. We do not pretend other in this plan than the restitution of the Catholic faith in the whole of the kingdoms of England and Scotland, the liberation of the Queen of Scots of her prison, the conservation of the life and soul of the young King of Scotland from the heretics and the confirmation in the heresy, the liberation of the Catholics affected and persecuted by their faith in England and the other places, and finally, the rebuilding of the Church of God in that part.' Quoted by Hicks, *Letters and Memorials of Father Robert Persons*, pp. 148-9.

²⁸⁶ Foundations and matters from the part of Scotland.

²⁸⁷ Lennox had already pointed out that the best place for the landing would be Dumbarton castle, because of the port, and because of the nobles of the area: the earl of Eglinton, Cassillis, Morton, Sir Gordon of Lochleven.

²⁸⁸ Eguiluz, *Persons*, pp. 100-1.

²⁸⁹ The disposition of England to this enterprise.

example of possible victory of individual rebellions as the one of Thomas Wyatt;²⁹⁰ something very surprising as Thomas Wyatt's rebellion had failed.

The epigraph of the memorandum was titled *Li mezzi per condurre questa impresa all'effetti*,²⁹¹ that contained eight points, and a ninth referred to propaganda: they asked for eight thousand infantry soldiers, or six thousand if they were well trained and experienced, with money to pay eight thousand native soldiers for four or six months, in this time everything would be prepared. They could camouflage these preparations by pretending that these soldiers would depart from Spain for September to go and fight in the wars of the Catholic king in the Netherlands, and the departure by the end of that month or October to land on the West of Scotland. Apart from their own weapons, these men would carry with them armament for 3,000 native soldiers and some artillery. It was necessary for the enterprise that the Pope should appoint a bishop for Durham. This was possibly to be done in secret and, with the other lords, the bishop would return to Scotland; all would hide in safe houses, until the time they were to receive the Spanish expedition, when they would go to their respective shires to levy their armies to unite with the expedition. They would need to prepare money in Paris to meet these travel expenses.

The excuse for levying the army in Scotland would be the defence of James's rights to the English crown, which had been attacked by certain noblemen such as Robert Dudley, the earl of Leicester, and Henry Hastings, and their followers as well as some heretic ministers. Once the army arrived in England, a second pretext for the enterprise would be to make the Pope's excommunication against Elizabeth effective, for which, all those who defended her would be guilty of high treason and be dispossessed of their wealth, rights and lives, which would put much pressure on those closest to her.

For this the Pope would need to renew the excommunication against Elizabeth, letting it be known that her tyranny was so oppressive that she has no right to be the Queen nor to be obeyed; moreover, those who would rise against her would gain plenary indulgence, while those who would not would be excommunicated.

²⁹⁰ Eguiluz, *Persons*, p. 101.

They would have to remind the Pope and Philip II to prepare a Council of State and Government for the general that would lead the expedition, composed of the principal men of Scotland and England, whose aim would be to settle the differences that could appear amongst the representatives of the Pope, Philip and Mary. And among them, there should have been a special authority of the Church that would intervene in cases of conscience. There was a need to publish some books in English to explain to the people the basis behind the right to excommunicate the principal heretics and to give details of the acts of brutality and cruelty perpetrated by Elizabeth during her reign and to explain clearly Mary's right to the English crown. Some of those pamphlets were already written, but not printed; others would be written as soon as a reply from Rome was sent.²⁹²

The final section was entitled *Del tempo di questa impresa et perche da di bisogno tanta fretta et celerita*.²⁹³ Here, it points out that the best time for this enterprise was the following September or, at the very latest, October, after the harvest, so the army would be able to find provisions; moreover, this was the only time that they could be found. If not, they would need to wait for another year, which would completely invalidate the enterprise for the following reasons: firstly, the plan could be discovered. Secondly, James VI could be assassinated or marry a heretic, which would lead to his fall into heresy. Thirdly, England could provoke a great political change in Scotland. Also, it was claimed that the English Catholics were in such difficulties that they would not be able to suffer any more nor help the enterprise under these conditions, because every day, more and more of them were imprisoned and dispossessed of their wealth.

The Memoranda finished with the following words:

El pero preghiam humilmente la Sua Santita et Maesta Catholica di non lasciare passare questa occasione, data et ordinata de Iddio signore nostro (come speriamo) per liberare quest due regni dalla tirannia heretica, el consequentemente per dare finale pace alla chiesa d'Iddio et alli regni catholici di questa bande.²⁹⁴

²⁹¹ Means to lead this enterprise all effect.

²⁹² Eguiluz, *Persons*, pp. 101-3.

²⁹³ Of the time of this enterprise and why the need of haste and speed.

²⁹⁴ 'We supplicate earnestly to Your Holiness and Catholic Majesty not to let pass this occasion, given and ordered by God Our Lord (as we hope) to liberate both realms of the heretic tyranny, and

By the end of the meeting, everyone agreed that Philip II and the Pope should be called upon to help. If they did not, there was no chance for Lennox to maintain his position for much longer with England and the Scottish Kirk allied against him.²⁹⁵

It was decided that Persons should go to see Philip carrying Lennox's letters, and Crichton to go and meet with Pope Gregory XIII, both also taking with them letters and instructions from Guise;²⁹⁶ and though the two Jesuits had other orders from their superiors, the papal nuncio insisted and, his authority prevailed.²⁹⁷ Moreover before leaving, both Jesuits had an interview with Tassis in Beaton's house. Crichton gave Beaton a summary of Lennox's plans and Persons assured him that the Catholics of the Isle wished to receive help from Spain. Without delay, Persons went to see the nuncio, to whom he explained the necessity of the appointment of Allen as bishop of Durham, a city of key importance because of its proximity to the English frontier with Scotland. Also, later on, Beaton, Allen, Crichton and Persons revisited the nuncio to give him a memorandum of the enterprise, a document that Crichton and Persons took with them on their respective journeys.²⁹⁸

Before Persons reached the Spanish court, Mendoza informed Philip II of the notoriously optimistic plans of the plotters in Paris. He, simply, limited himself from giving great detail of the plans of those in Paris to the king.

Y que para significar esto a V[uestra] M[ajestad] y Su Santidad conviene que el Padre Personio fue se con las cartas del de Lenos a V[uestra] M[ajestad] y Su Santidad y instruccion de la manera que habia de proceder, ofreciendo asimismo que si fuese necesario, el luego que la gente del embarcase en Escocia pasaria en este Reino y provincia de Sussex con 4.000 hombres para divertir a los herejes, que en el entretanto V[uestra] M[ajestad] y el Papa mandasen proveer de 10.000 escudos para fortificar el puerto y el castillo de Domberton y Edemburg y reforzar la guardia del Rey, lo cual me escriben el Doctor Alano y los demas pidiendome diese cuenta a V[uestra] M[ajestad] al momento dello y enviase una carta para el Padre Personio que partiria luego, con la cual pidiese ser conocido de don Juan de Idiaquez para significalle a V[uestra] M[ajestad] que era llegado.²⁹⁹

consequently to carry the peace to the Church of God and to all the Catholic kingdoms of this part.' Hicks, *Letters and Memorials of Father Robert Persons*, pp. 149-57.

²⁹⁵ Eguluz, *Persons*, p. 103.

²⁹⁶ AGS, Tassis to Philip II, 29 May 1582, E Leg. 836, fos. 124-5; Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 254-7.

²⁹⁷ Eguluz, *Persons*, p. 103.

²⁹⁸ Hicks, *Letters and Memorials of Father Robert Persons*, pp. liv-v.

²⁹⁹ 'And that to signify this to Your Majesty and His Holiness it is convenient that Father Persons goes with the letter of Lennox and instruction on the way that it should be proceeded, to Your Majesty and His Holiness. At the same time offering if necessary, that after the people that would embark in Scotland would pass this kingdom and the province of Sussex with 4,000 men to entertain there the heretics while Your Majesty and the Pope should order to provide 10,000 crowns to fortified the port

The solution to the problems of the English and Scottish Catholics was not as simple as Persons seemed to believe. The euphoria of those meeting in Paris was patent, naïve and completely lacked a solid base. Looking at these unrealistic plans, Mendoza and Mary could not give credit to what they considered a clear manifestation of the political ineptitude of the Jesuits in charge of the matter, who seemed to believe that the armies could be mobilised at a moment's notice. Philip and the Pope had not said a word about the delicate subject, they were waiting for the arrival of Crichton and Persons. Moreover, the Pope was worried about the Turks, and Philip II was occupied, in military terms, with the problems of restoring peace to the Low Countries. And Mendoza, despite that having tried to keep an open mind to the credibility of the operational procedures in plan, knew that it was unviable.³⁰⁰

It was not only Mendoza who had been deceived by the plans plotted in Paris. The project had found enemies even within the Catholic community, especially amongst those in exile. Charles Paget and Thomas Morgan, leaders of the English Catholics in the exile, by orders of Mary Stewart, put up covert resistance to Beaton and dispossessed him of the administration of Mary's dower lands in France, valued at around three million crowns a year. Paget and Morgan believed that they were not called to the meeting in Paris,³⁰¹ because they supported the Scottish case against any Spanish intervention. This was understood by them as a clear example of the division among the English Catholic exiles.³⁰² Nevertheless, Persons affirmed that Paget had been excluded from the meeting in Paris as an explicit wish of Guise and of Beaton, and affirmed that since then, Paget and Morgan had not ceased instigating Mary to mistrust Spain and the Jesuits.³⁰³

and castles of Dumbarton and Edinburgh and reinforce the guard of the king [James VI], which had been requested by Doctor Alan [Allen] and the others asking me to inform Your Majesty and send a letter for Father Persons that would depart afterwards, [and] with which, he would be introduced to don Juan de Idiaquez to signify to Your Majesty that he would have arrived.' AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, June 1582, E Leg. 836, fos. 124-5.

³⁰⁰ Eguiluz, *Persons*, p. 105.

³⁰¹ *ibid.*, p. 106.

³⁰² Persons, 'Story of Domestical Difficulties,' Stonyhurst MSS, printed in Knox, *Records of the English Catholics*, ii, p. 413.

³⁰³ Eguiluz, *Persons*, p. 106.

Persons finally left Paris for Lisbon on 28 May 1582,³⁰⁴ to tackle the matter with Philip II.³⁰⁵ Only a day later, Tassis wrote a letter to Philip preceding Persons on his arrival in the Iberian Peninsula which was meant to prepare a friendly welcome by Philip II for the Jesuits. In this dispatch, Tassis affirmed that the two Jesuits had already departed from Paris: the Scot for Rome, four or five days before, and the Englishman to Spain, the day before. To avoid unnecessary publicity, Persons travelled under the name of Ricardo Melino. Tassis added that both priests were moderate in their requests, and that they had not agreed with Guise's – *alias* Hercules – plan. The said plan involved leaving the enterprise in the hands of the Pope. According to Tassis, Persons and Crichton knew that the plan was unrealistic but necessary, but believed that the Pope should give his name and money to the enterprise, while Philip II should carry out the military operations secretly.³⁰⁶

Crichton reached Rome while Persons was still travelling. The Pope was very pleased with the report that he had received from the Jesuit,³⁰⁷ likening it to the crusades in the Holy Land. Within one month, he contacted Philip II to try to get him to accept and support this holy cause. The first of the letters was going to arrive at the Spanish court at the same time as Persons to explain his ideas and the likelihood of success.³⁰⁸

Persons arrived at Lisbon on 15 June 1582, not aware that his arrival was at an inopportune moment. The King was completely preoccupied with the Isle of Terceira that, since the incorporation of the Portuguese kingdom to the Spanish crown in 1580, had been rebellious, and had found allies in the French, under the command of the Condotiero Strozzi. When Persons entered Lisbon, the Spanish fleet was preparing its departure for the Azores. To obscure Persons's perspectives even more, the Spanish King was suffering from strong pains brought on by gout, and this made it impossible for the Jesuit to make an appointment with the sovereign. Nevertheless, Persons got in touch with the secretary of state, don Juan de Idiaquez, who probably passed onto the

³⁰⁴ However, Persons affirmed that the date of departure of Paris was 1 May, but it may be a mistake of the Jesuit. *ibid.*, p. 229.

³⁰⁵ Hicks, *Letters and Memorials of Father Robert Persons*, pp. liv-v.

³⁰⁶ *CSP Span.*, iii, pp. 378-9; Eguiluz, *Persons*, p. 109;

³⁰⁷ *ibid.*, p. 109.

³⁰⁸ *ibid.*, pp. 109-10.

King all that they discussed.³⁰⁹ Only after several weeks of tedious waiting, was Persons able to talk personally with the King.³¹⁰

On 4 July 1582, Cardinal Granvelle wrote a memorandum to Philip, in part supporting the project that Persons had carried with him.³¹¹ The minister believed that there were only two ways to proceed: either things should be left as they were or if they proceeded, the action should be conclusive and on a predetermined date, October, as plan proposed.³¹² The cited memorandum, had been printed in English, and said, amongst other things:

I have spoken with Englefield and find that Persons has fully communicated to him the whole of his errand, as also had the queen of Scotland, from whom a letter came for him today, which will be delivered at one...He, Englefield, says that Persons' companion, who came with him on his journey, knows nothing whatever about the business...Madrid, 4 July 1582.³¹³

It is obvious that Persons did not waste time while he waited to be received by Philip II. However, Philip did not think that it was possible to have a fleet ready for the chosen date. Firstly, because the Pope had not made any financial offers. Pope Gregory, despite supporting the enterprise sincerely, had hoped that Spain would supply the troops and money. Philip was not the type of person who was easily attracted by the enthusiasm of others; he needed facts and figures, more than opinions and hopes. The experienced Mendoza made an estimate of the Catholic forces in England that differed greatly from the one in Persons's memorial. When Persons assured the King and his advisers that the Pope would give more help than he had originally promised, they severely questioned his authority.³¹⁴

³⁰⁹ *ibid.*, p. 110.

³¹⁰ Persons to Beaton, 2 July, printed in Hicks, *Letters and Memorials of Father Robert Persons*, p. lv.

³¹¹ This memorandum was probably based on the reports of the young Colonel William Sempill, a Scottish mercenary in the Flanders and future founder of the Scottish College in Madrid. Sempill commented later that in the year 1582 the duke of Parma sent him with a commission to Philip II to represent the importance that 'it was to use Scotland against England, and by the experience that I had of the things of the rebels I tried to represent my orders of informing of the convenience of making the defensive war by land in Flanders and offensive by sea cutting the commerce and fisheries of the rebels, I arrived at Madrid, and I was sent to visit the Cardinal Granvelle.' SCA, 'Razones por saver si escosia es deseando al Rey d'Espana,' CA4/9/10; he noticed that Captain Duro affirmed that William Sempill entered to serve Spain in 1573 by order of Mary Stewart. C.F. Duro, *La Armada Invencible*, i (Madrid, 1884), p. 158; however, this happened in 1582 and not in 1573. NLS, 'Historie of Scotland, since the death of King James the first until the death of King James the sixth,' ADV MS 35.5.3.

³¹² Memorandum of Granvelle, 4 July 1582. *CSP Span.*, iii, pp. 382-3.

³¹³ Sir Francis Englefield was an important English Catholic exiled in the Spanish court, who sometimes advised Philip II on the affairs of that nation; *CSP Span.*, iii, p. 383.

³¹⁴ Parish, 'Robert Parsons and the English Counter-Reformation,' *RUS*, lii (1966), p. 30.

In the current situation, Persons's labour in the Spanish court had been, at least for the moment, fruitless, but the Jesuit decided to stay and try to convince Philip. J.H. Pollen summarised a letter from Persons, under the nickname of Gerardo Bentivoglio, to the nuncio in France dated 16 June 1582:

Has written by every post except the last, when companion [Sir Thomas Tresham] wrote. Business in *assai buoni termini*, King [of Spain] favourable and has written to [Tassis] and the Duke of Guise. Nothing, however, has been done, because the Pope has not spoken.³¹⁵

This scheme to make Scotland the springboard for the 'enterprise of England' with Lennox as its principal architect in Scotland and the Jesuits as its channels of communication, rested on enthusiastic rather than realistic estimates of the political and military possibilities of raising such Catholic forces. What little chance it had of success was destroyed by the events in Scotland of the summer of 1582.³¹⁶

At the end of July 1582, Mendoza was visited by Holt, who had recently arrived from Scotland. Holt had brought him a letter from Lennox in response to two previous letters of Mendoza, complaining of the present difficulties and the pressure that he was facing in the realm. According to the letter, Lennox and Lord Seton were being persecuted, and, hence, asked for help to transport James VI out of the realm. Without losing time, Mendoza wrote a letter in reply, in which he asserted that it was a good idea to remove James from the realm. Very surprisingly, he also sent £3,000 to Archibald Douglas – the 8th earl of Angus – to 'execute the affair of Scotland.'³¹⁷

In less than a month, on 14 August 1582, Mendoza had already received news from Angus. Mendoza explained: 'El Conde de Angisa ha avisado de las fronteras que entendia tener a su devocion doce personajes, y que entre ellos serian el Conde de Mar y Milord Untel.'³¹⁸

This affirmation is very surprising, because the earls of Angus and Mar were in fact the leaders of the anglophile faction in Scotland; but the earl of Huntly was one of the

³¹⁵ Hicks, *Letters and Memorials of Father Robert Persons*, p. 167.

³¹⁶ Burns, 'The Political Background of the Reformation,' p. 226.

³¹⁷ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 25 July 1582, E Leg. 836, fo. 165; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 400-2.

³¹⁸ 'The earl of Angus has advised on the [affair of the] frontiers that he understands to have under his devotion twelve personages, and among them the earl of Mar [Erkskine, John, 2nd earl of Mar] and Milord Untel [Gordon, George, 6th earl & 1st marquis of Huntly].' AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 14 Aug. 1582, E Leg. 836, fos. 17-5; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 409-12.

leaders of the Catholic faction. In August 1582, Angus, Gowrie, and Mar, had captured James VI while he was hunting near Ruthven castle, which had provoked the subsequent escape of Lennox to Dumbarton castle and had interrupted the Catholic conspiracies for a period of time.³¹⁹ So, why did Mendoza send money to Angus to accomplish this ‘affair of Scotland’?

On one hand, it could be thought that Angus had tricked Mendoza. Angus had been forfeited in the summer of 1581, and could have easily pretended that he, in need of money, had decided to collaborate with Spain. However, Mendoza was an experienced and well-informed diplomat. But Mendoza had opposed Lennox’s plans to remove James from the realm. Thus, Mendoza fearing that Lennox, with aid from Guise, would try to transport James out of Scotland, could have decided to finance the ‘enemy.’ In a letter, Persons claimed that he was in a meeting with Philip II when the news of the seizure of James VI reached the palace.³²⁰ According to Persons, Philip commented on this matter that, although he wished all the good to James, and had great sympathies for him, because he was among heretics, he could not see what else he could do apart from wait, and ready himself for a propitious moment to come to the aid of the kingdom, Queen and Catholics of Scotland.³²¹ Nevertheless, all these explanations of why Mendoza sent money to Angus, are not anything more than mere conjectures.

In fact, before departing, Persons received from Philip, not the army that he had requested, but the sum of 24,000 crowns for James, and some money for Lennox to be able to resist the intrigues of Elizabeth.³²²

In the handwriting of the Jesuit we have the following summary of the events:

This summer was spent in Lisbon when the Marques of Santa Cruz went to the Terceras and had his victory against the French and Pedro Strozza. And in the meane space the Q[ueen] of England mistrusting the Duke of Lenox for that he was Catholickly given caused him to be taken by a sleight of hunting in Scotland and the King to be taken from him, himself to goe to France by England, where he was poysoned as is supposed, for that he dyed as soon as he

³¹⁹ Lynch, *Scotland*, pp. 232-3.

³²⁰ William Gibbe [Persons] to Father Watts or Holt, 26 Aug. 1582. Hicks, *Letters and Memorials of Father Robert Persons*, pp. 111, 168.

³²¹ Rev. S.J. Pollen (ed.), *Father Persons’ Memoirs. Punti per la Missione d’Inghilterra*, vi (CRS, 1942), p. 63.

³²² Philip II to Tassis, 24 Sept. 1582. *CSP Span.*, iii, p. 401.

arryved att Paris, and so fell all that attempt to the ground. Which being heard in Lisbon I returned with Mr. William Tressan [Tresham] about Michelmasse...At this my being with the K[ing] of Spaine I obtained 24 thousand crownes to be sent to the K[ing] of Scots, which were payed by Juan Baptist Taxis in Paris.³²³

He also gave some more details about the money given by the king, in these lines:

Personio vendedo la buona dispositione del Re (di Spagna) a aiutar li cattolici di tutti due regni l'informo delli bisogni del seminario Inglese di Rhemis in Francia e del fruto che faceva en Inghilterra, e che se bene papa Gregorio li dava ogni anno due militia scudi di limosina tuttavia che questo non bastava per la moltitudine de scholari che venivano d'Inghilterra abbandonando l'heresia. Con che mosso il buon Re assegno anche subito due millitia scuti per sua parte in auto di quel seminario.³²⁴

From this trip Persons got, as it can be read in these lines, an excellent personal opinion of Philip II, he almost demonstrates devotion for a sovereign in whom he had put his hopes to rid his country of the heresy that was destroying it. Persons informed Allen, probably not in a completely positive manner, of Philip's reaction to the problem of the invasion. Nevertheless, something had been achieved, which was that Philip, despite being unable at that moment to aid them, maintained his promise of help, which was certainly important.³²⁵

Concerning the problem of the invasion of England, Philip trusted in some way that he would get help from the Catholics within the country thanks to the Jesuits and their work. With Mary being a prisoner of Elizabeth and James of the Ruthven lords, there was no clear head of state in Scotland. Thus, the appointment of a cardinal by the Pope would be a great step forward, because the Catholics would go to consult him, and would follow his orders without hesitation.³²⁶ Mendoza had already proposed Allen for the cardinal's hat in April 1581,³²⁷ and Persons already had him in mind for the bishopric of Durham.³²⁸

This was a vital issue, clearly without help from the native population an invasion was not possible. Moreover, the missionaries, under Allen and Persons's control,

³²³ Pollen, *The Memoirs of Father Robert Persons*, ii, p. 31.

³²⁴ 'Persons seeing the good disposition of the King (of Spain) to help the Catholics of the whole kingdom informed him of the needs of the English seminary of Rheims in France and of the fruit made in England, that the good Pope Gregory gave two thousand crowns per year what was not enough for the multitude of scholars that came from England leaving the heresy. The good King assigned two thousand crowns to that seminary.' Persons, 'Punti della Missioni d'Inghilterra,' in Knox, *Records*, ii, p. 35.

³²⁵ Tauton, *History of the Jesuits*, p. 102.

³²⁶ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 1 Nov. 1582, E Leg. 836, fos. 189-90; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 418-22.

³²⁷ See AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 4 May 1581, E Leg. 835, fo. 92; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 11-5.

constituted the main sources of information about the state of Scotland. But this did not mean that Philip II trusted them. In a dispatch to Tassis on 24 September 1582, the Spanish King commented that ‘además de lo dicho arriba, podreis dezir a Hércules juntamente con aquello, que miré que en lo de la religión se puede tener tan poca seguridad.’³²⁹

Nevertheless, their reports of the state of the realm of Scotland continued reaching Spain through Mendoza, Tassis and sometimes, through special bearers.³³⁰ However, with Lennox out of the realm, and Elizabeth’s contacts with James strengthening his attachment to Protestantism,³³¹ the possibility of using Scotland as a route to England entered into a crisis, and subsequently, the Spanish subsidy to the Jesuit mission in the realm.³³²

Conspiracy and Crisis

At the beginning of 1581, Mary had proposed to her son, through Guise, an act of ‘Association,’ under which she would become joint sovereign of Scotland with James. This stipulated that she would give him the title of king, but he would have to rule the country in the names of them both.³³³ Although James wrote an affectionate letter to his mother in April, neither he nor Lennox received her proposals with any cordiality, and Mary looked back to the possibility of an armed intervention by Philip II.³³⁴

She decided to contact Philip through Tassis. Thus, on 6 November 1581, Tassis confided in Philip how Beaton had gone to visit him. During this meeting, Tassis asked Beaton about the present state of Scotland, and more precisely, if there was any chance of a conversion of James to the Catholic faith. The archbishop replied that there not had been any change of James’s religious faith, but that James had showed

³²⁸ See p. 54 of this thesis.

³²⁹ ‘Apart of what it is said above, you can tell to Hercules [the duke of Guise] together with this, to look that if in the religion such little confidence can be held.’ Philip II to Tassis, from Lisbon, 24 Sept. 1582. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 260-3.

³³⁰ See for example AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 1 Nov. 1582, E Leg. 836, fo. 185; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 416-7.

³³¹ BL, ‘Original Scottish Letters, 1525-1603,’ i. Letter of Queen Elizabeth to [James VI] of Scotland, 20 Dec. 1582, Add. MS 19,401.

³³² Eguiluz, *Persons*, p. 211.

³³³ R. Rait, *King James’s Secret: negotiations between Elizabeth and James VI relating to the execution of Mary Queen of Scots, from the Warrender Papers* (London, 1927), pp. 8-11.

intention in governing according to his mother's will. And in her efforts not to get relegated from these affairs, Mary had given orders to the archbishop to go to Scotland as an adviser her son, of course, she would let Philip and Guise know of this beforehand.³³⁵

Philip agreed that the best solution for the Scottish problem would be James's conversion to Catholicism, but disagreed with the 'association.'³³⁶ In case James would not convert, he recommended the preparation of a combined, native and foreign, assault to the Isle.³³⁷ Thus, in the first week of October, Mary wrote to the Scotsmen in Flanders, in particular Colonel Stewart, asking them to retire themselves, offering them a pension in Scotland. Under Philip's orders, Mendoza wrote to Mary approving of her actions.³³⁸

On the other hand, James knew that in the eyes of his Catholic subjects his right to the throne was questionable during his mother's lifetime, and decided upon checking all his possibilities. In October 1581, he had received a visit from Beaton, who had come to negotiate the proposed 'association.'³³⁹ He knew Elizabeth's position referring to this matter and also Mary's intentions, at least those regarding Spain and the Pope. James decided to send George Douglas – a brother of laird of Lochleven – with letters to Guise, to see if the French King would admit an ambassador from him to renew and confirm the 'auld alliance' between both kingdoms and also consult on the possible marriage between him and the princess of Lorraine.³⁴⁰

In April 1582, Mendoza wrote to Mary assuring that it was true that Philip and the Pope would help supplying troops and funding. However, he apologised, because it

³³⁴ PRO, James VI to Mary Stewart, from Dalkeith, 28 May 1582, SP 53/12/12; BL, Add. MS 48,027, fos. 248-9.

³³⁵ Tassis to Philip II, 6 Nov. 1581. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 229-32.

³³⁶ In a letter dated 9 February 1582, Mendoza reminded to Philip II that the fact that the Queen of Scots was very close to France and that Esmé Stewart was French and not Scottish made him to be very suspicious of any association. AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 9 Feb. 1582, E Leg. 835, fos. 46-9; BL, 'Evidence of propossal for an Association with Queen Mary in the Crown of Scotland,' 1583, Add. MS 48,049, fos. 261-2b; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 277-85.

³³⁷ AGS, Philip II to Mendoza, from Lisbon, without date, among the papers of 1581, E Leg. 835, fos. 29-30; *CODOIN*, xci, pp. 569-71.

³³⁸ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 9 Oct. 1581, E Leg. 835, fo. 39; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 132-6.

³³⁹ See PRO, James VI to Mary Stewart, from Dalkeith, 28 May 1582, SP 53/12/12; James VI, *Letters*, pp. 46-7.

³⁴⁰ Christine, daughter of Charles II, duke of Lorraine. She married in 1583 Ferdinand of Medici, great

was impossible to carry the enterprise now due to the events in France. In fact, Elizabeth was renegotiating the Treaty of Blois with the Queen Mother of France, which was, in effect, a defensive alliance with France against Spain.³⁴¹ To ensure that this news reached Scotland, Mendoza sent a copy of the letter to George Douglas, knowing that he would immediately inform Mary, and another to Tassis, asking him to do the same in case he were to write to her as well.³⁴² Mary was suspicious of Mendoza's actions,³⁴³ and the Mary-Mendoza relationship seemed to be going through a hardship during the summer of 1582.

At the same time, the Kirk had become increasingly concerned with James's lack of devotion to the Protestant faith and Robert Bowes, the English ambassador to Scotland, was also uncertain of James's personal political loyalties.³⁴⁴ The anger of the Kirk and the Protestants was intense against James's French favourite, Lennox, although he had made a declaration of conversion to Protestantism.³⁴⁵ James's other favourite, James Stewart, the earl of Arran, had alienated almost everybody. James's unconvincing letter of excuse of 19 June³⁴⁶ had achieved nothing with Elizabeth. The situation worsened, when on 26 July 1582, Francis Stewart, 5th earl of Bothwell, landed at Newhaven, in Lothian.³⁴⁷ He had been on the continent for four years, but he had returned home at the duke's request when, a year previously, he had ignored (or refused) the summons of his tutor. Francis was a relative of not only Lennox but also Arran, Lennox's colleague. Although Bothwell was a Protestant and was allied to the Douglasses, from the English government's perspective, Bothwell was another potential collaborator for Lennox.³⁴⁸

The Kirk and Protestants had reasons to be concerned about the political situation of Scotland. At the beginning of July, John Seton went to visit Tassis in Flanders. On 9 July, Tassis informed Philip that Seton had carried a plan from Scotland: he would go to the Spanish court to live there for a while, as part of his title of *gentil homme de la*

duke of Tuscany. Tassis to Philip II, 6 Nov. 1581. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 229-32.

³⁴¹ Elizabeth, *Letters*, p. 169.

³⁴² AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 26 Apr. 1582, E Leg. 836, fos. 115-7; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 359-3.

³⁴³ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 4 May 1582, E Leg. 836, fo. 121; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 368-9.

³⁴⁴ Calderwood, *History*, iii, p. 613; Macpherson, 'Francis Stewart, 5th Earl Bothwell,' p. 140.

³⁴⁵ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 25 July 1582, E Leg. 836, fo. 165; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 400-2.

³⁴⁶ PRO, James VI to Elizabeth I, 19 June 1593, SP 53/30/10; James VI, *Letters*, pp. 48-9.

³⁴⁷ Moysie, *Memoirs*, p. 37; Macpherson, 'Francis Stewart, 5th Earl Bothwell,' p. 139.

³⁴⁸ *ibid.*, p. 140.

boca de su Majestad;³⁴⁹ but his real motive was to try to convince Philip to pursue the enterprise through Scotland. Seton had been sent by several Scottish lords who supported the idea of taking arms to liberate James. Seton assured Tassis that the earl of Gowrie was also going to depart for Spain, and that James knew of these plans.³⁵⁰ At the same time, Mendoza had received a letter from Lennox via Crichton and another three Scottish nobles. Mendoza informed the Spanish monarch that John Seton and Lennox, not the earl of Gowrie, had acquired passports from Elizabeth to pass into Spain.³⁵¹

But Philip was thinking in terms of vigilance more than action. Subsequently, Philip ordered Mendoza and Tassis to write to Lennox giving him hope and encouraging his work in Scotland. Moreover, he asked Tassis to send a thousand crowns to Lennox.³⁵² There was little likelihood that Lennox would pass to Spain, but Philip wanted to make sure that the duke would not leave the realm. Thus, Mendoza was made in charge of conceiving a plan to fortify some towns in Scotland, but not as a base for the invasion, rather as shelter for Lennox and the other people involved in the invasion plan. Mendoza reported to Philip:

Escribo al Conde de Olivares para que represente a Su Santidad el tocarle proveer de dinero para la fortificacion de las plazas, por ser de tanto momento para que no desampare al de Lenos y los demas.³⁵³

Meanwhile, Beaton went to see Tassis carrying two letters with news from Scotland; one was a letter from Mary and the other a letter from the governor of Nantes to Guise concerning Lennox.³⁵⁴ On 6 December 1582, Mendoza had already sent a translation of the letter of the governor of Nantes to Guise to Philip, informing that:

³⁴⁹ 'Master of the Household.' This title had been granted to John Seton in 1573. SCA, 'Razones por saver si escocia es deseando al Rey d'España,' CA4/9/10; SCA, 'Clase de papeles del Colonel Semple,' 15 Oct. 1620, CA4/3/13.

³⁵⁰ Tassis to Philip II, 9 July 1583. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 294-7.

³⁵¹ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 30 Aug. 1582, E Leg. 836, fos. 177-8; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 412-5.

³⁵² Philip II to Tassis, from Lisbon, 24 Sept. 1582. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 260-3.

³⁵³ 'I write to the count of Olivares [the Spanish ambassador to Rome] to represent to His Holiness that he has to provide money for the fortifying of the towns, because it is not time to abandon Lennox and the others.' AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 14 Aug. 1582, E Leg. 836, fos. 174-5; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 409-12; see also AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 1 Nov. 1582, E Leg. 836, fos. 189-90; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 418-22.

³⁵⁴ Tassis to Philip II, from Paris, 29 Dec. 1582. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 265-9; Philip II to Tassis, 24 Jan. 1583, *ibid.*, v, pp. 271-3.

Acaban de llegar de la Rochela dos mercaderes Escoceses que yo conozco. Me han asegurado de haver visto a M. de Lenos en Escocia de cinco semanas aca, en una isla llamada Lisse...que el dicho señor de Lenox no saldra del reyno de Escocia.³⁵⁵

By 20 January 1583, Mendoza had reported Lennox's return to the Scottish court. This news had been secretly carried by Thomas Kerr of Ferniehurst, because it was impossible for Lennox to go himself.³⁵⁶ Kerr had gone to London with a letter of reference in Lennox's handwriting, and with two lines of cipher that would be used by them to continue the secret correspondence. During their meeting, Kerr claimed that Lennox had asked him to say that if necessary he would declare himself Protestant, but that he wanted to let the Pope, Mary, and Philip, know that, deep inside, he was a Catholic. The envoy also gave a letter to Mendoza from Mary, referring to her rights to the English throne. Before departing back to Scotland, Kerr returned a second time to Mendoza to thank him on behalf of Lennox.³⁵⁷

Once again, England was ready to counter Lennox's return to the political and diplomatic scene. Thus, on 20 January, Walsingham sent William Wade to Spain to declare to Philip the inconveniences that his resident ambassador in London was causing as part of 'dangerous plots.'³⁵⁸ Moreover, Robert Dudley – the earl of Leicester – commanded one of the sons of Elizabeth Cavendish – the countess of Shrewsbury – to visit Mary and discuss with her James's possible marriage in England.³⁵⁹ It was most likely that the proposed bride was to be Arbella Stewart, grand-daughter of the countess of Shrewsbury and daughter of Charles Stewart, Mary's brother-in-law.

Furthermore, in Scotland, Holt and Alexander Seton were arrested by Colonel Stewart in the first days of April 1583. Holt had been carrying with him two ciphered letters from Lennox to James, and another to Alexander Seton, who was said to be in contact with the Pope. Without losing any time Mendoza changed the cipher that he had with

³⁵⁵ 'Two Scottish merchants who I know have just arrived from La Rochelle. They have assured me that they have seen the Master [duke] of Lennox in Scotland five weeks ago, in a Isle called Lisse [the Isle of Inchkeith, in the Forth]...The said Lord [duke] of Lennox would not leave the kingdom of Scotland.' The governor of Nantes to the duke of Guise, 6 Dec. 1582. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 264-5.

³⁵⁶ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 20 Jan. 1583, E Leg. 838, fo. 14; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 458-60.

³⁵⁷ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 26 Jan. 1583, E Leg. 838, fos. 20-2; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 461-7.

³⁵⁸ BL, 'Instructions given to Willem Waade, being sent unto the King of Spayne the xxth of Januarye 1583.' Add. MS 48,027, fos. 362-70.

³⁵⁹ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 20 Mar. 1583, E Leg. 838, fo. 47; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 484-6;

Allen, which was identical to the one he used with Holt.³⁶⁰ Two weeks later, on 15 April, Mendoza reported of Holt's tortures and how they also had arrested Thomas Kerr of Ferniehurst, who two months previously had interviewed Mendoza.³⁶¹

According to Tauton, the English reaction was partially provoked because of the plot to kill Elizabeth, promoted by the dukes of Guise and of Alençon.³⁶² Guise had never forgotten that if his cousin Mary was on the throne of a Catholic Great Britain, it would be an immense support for him in his ambitions in France, therefore, he did not abandon his efforts so easily. The Protestants had already gained control of the government in Scotland, and it was impossible to initiate an uprising in that country. Guise met Tassis in the first days of May 1583, when he informed Tassis that he had organised an invasion of England, which involved the murder of Elizabeth. To be able to carry it out, Guise needed a subvention of 100,000 crowns from the Pope and Philip II.³⁶³ Mendoza had, by 6 May, already prepared more than 10,000 crowns to be sent to Rouen and Paris.³⁶⁴

Persons commented that it was later known that Charles Paget and Thomas Morgan were the ones that had suggested to Guise the benefits of having Mary as queen of England. Moreover, when in 1583 the duke reinforced his favourable inclination for requesting Spain's aid, Paget had offered to go on his behalf to England to establish an alliance with the earl of Northumberland. According to Persons, he, Guise, Father Hernico Salmerio – a French Jesuit – and Father Claudio Mateo – Guise's confessor – had heard how Paget and Morgan affirmed that they had convinced the Queen of Scots to distrust Guise because of his approach to Spain and to the Jesuits.³⁶⁵

Nevertheless, it looked as if new perspectives of understanding between the Pope, Philip and Guise were opening up. At once, the duke convoked a meeting in the house of the nuncio in Paris with Tassis, Beaton, De Mainville – the envoy of the King of France to James VI – and Father Claude Mathieu. Apart from these political figures,

³⁶⁰ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 4 Apr. 1583, E Leg. 838, fo. 54; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 488-90.

³⁶¹ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 15 Apr. 1583, from London, E Leg. 838, fo. 55; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 492-4.

³⁶² Tauton, *History of the Jesuits*, p. 105.

³⁶³ Tassis to Philip II, 19 Apr. 1583. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 273-6.

³⁶⁴ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 6 May 1583, E Leg. 838, fo. 68; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 500-1.

³⁶⁵ Eguiluz, *Persons*, p. 273.

Persons, who was at the time in Tassis's house at St Cloud, and Allen were called to Paris to be consulted on the subject. After abundant discussions and changes of plans, the project was written down and ready for being sent to the Pope and Philip II.³⁶⁶

The plan proposed that a Spanish force would depart, not by the Irish route, as was the traditional method considered in a case like this, but by the northern coast of England or the south of Scotland. Lancashire was an ideal locality for the landing. The Spanish disembarkation of troops there would be supported by a French force that would have come from the south of the Isle. At the same time, Robert Graham of Fintry – a nephew of the archbishop of Glasgow – would go to Rome with the money that Spain would have deposited in Paris, and would try to buy support for the cause. The date suggested for the beginning of the hostilities was the following September, but the nuncio and Tassis doubted that the operation could be carried out in that month; Guise was of the same opinion.³⁶⁷

Moreover, John, 8th Lord Maxwell was in France trying to persuade the continental Catholics to support James's rights to the English throne, if he granted the tolerance of religion in the Isle. Thus, Guise and Maxwell met with Beaton, the papal nuncio in Paris and the Spanish ambassador. He even had an audience with Henry III.³⁶⁸

Of course, Walsingham was very closely following these plots, and the rumours alarmed the Isle.³⁶⁹ The first reaction was the sending of an embassy from Scotland to Elizabeth, composed of Colonel Stewart, John Colville and David Lindsay, who arrived in London on 14 May. Supposedly, they had been sent by James VI, even though he was still being held prisoner. That was probably why Elizabeth did not give them an audience until 16 May. In brief, during their meeting they discussed: a league, offensive and defensive, between the two kingdoms, and James's affirmation to the Protestant religion.³⁷⁰ Furthermore, Colonel Stewart met Walsingham the following day.³⁷¹

³⁶⁶ Castelli to Cardinal Como, 11 and 20 June 1583, *CSP Span.*, iii, pp. 479; Tassis to Philip II, 24 June and 9 July 1583, *ibid.*, iii, pp. 487-8.

³⁶⁷ Hicks, *Letters and Memorials of Father Robert Persons*, p. lix.

³⁶⁸ K. Brown, 'The Making of a *Politique*: the Counter-Reformation and the regional politics of John eighth Lord Maxwell,' *SHR*, lxvi (1987), p. 155.

³⁶⁹ *ibid.*, p. 156.

³⁷⁰ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 20 May 1583, E Leg. 838. fos. 71, 74; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 501-3; the

On 11 June, Mendoza informed Philip that Elizabeth had granted a £3,000 pension to Stewart, Colville and Lindsay, and another £6,000 to James VI.³⁷² Philip commented in his letter of response that these were artifices of Elizabeth to raise James's hopes, but he doubted that she would actually do it.³⁷³ Nevertheless, Walter Miller, a usual correspondent of Mendoza, reported in July that James had refused the money that had been sent through his envoys, and he asserted that he would only accept if it from the hands of Elizabeth herself.³⁷⁴

Moreover, Elizabeth was advised that De Maineville was on his way to see Mary to treat her liberation according to the plans from the conference in Paris on May.³⁷⁵ De Maineville proposed to liberate her if she abandoned her pretensions to the English throne. Mary confessed to the English emissary, that she was old and sick, and that she would promise anything to be released from prison.³⁷⁶ But, as soon as he had left, Mary wrote to Mendoza asking for his opinion on the matter. Obviously, Mendoza was more concerned with Philip's interests than of hers, thus, he replied asking her to try to have:

toda diligencia posible para llevar adelante la gran empresa, sin consideración a su peligro personal, pues tendría ella, su vida por bien sacrificada si podía ayudar a la multido de catolicos.³⁷⁷

Philip was still unsure about a direct military intervention and required more information about the situation of the realm before making any decision. At the same time, John Seton passed to Spain with a memorial.³⁷⁸ But once again the events in Scotland would change the course of the strategies. James quietly bided his time and, on 29 June 1583, contrived to escape from the lords who had held him captive at

first news about Colonel Stewart's arrival at Scotland to go down to London dated 27 April 1583, however, it was mentioned he was accompanied by eighteen persons. *CSP Scot.* vi, p. 440.

³⁷¹ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 4 June 1583, E Leg. 838, fos. 74-5; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 503-6.

³⁷² AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 11 June 1583, E Leg. 838, fos. 78-9; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 506-9.

³⁷³ Philip II to Mendoza, 6 June 1583. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 279-80.

³⁷⁴ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 16 July 1583, E Leg. 838, fo. 87; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 512-4.

³⁷⁵ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 4 June 1583, E Leg. 838, fos. 74-5; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 503-6.

³⁷⁶ Tassis to Philip II, 4 May and 24 June 1583. *CSP Span.*, iii, p. 502.

³⁷⁷ 'All the diligence possible to carry out the great enterprise, without consideration to her personal danger, because she will have sacrificed her life well if she could help to the multitude of Catholics.' 'Because being Your Majesty the nearest Catholic heir of the royal blood of England, it could cause suspicion if you would leave to the poor Queen in the hands of her enemies.' This letter was intercepted by English agents. BL, Mendoza to Mary Stewart, without date, Add. MS 28,702.

³⁷⁸ *CSP Scot.*, vi, p. 506.

Ruthven Castle.³⁷⁹ Anxious to head off any English military intervention to reinstate the Ruthven government, James hastened to increase his diplomatic and political contacts.³⁸⁰

Shortly after his escape from the Raiders, James received a letter from Guise,³⁸¹ through Robert Graham of Fintry. James replied to Guise's letter on 19 August 1583. His response was clear, he felt very honoured by Philip planning to help Mary and to include him in the project. James also claimed that he wanted to take part in the plan, but he needed some time to contemplate it and asked Guise to let him know, through the same emissary, Fintry, how the plan was developing.³⁸²

This new plan involved Guise and his brother, the duke of Mayenne, disembarking simultaneously at different locations on the English coast. They would need a promise from the Pope and a Spanish fleet for support. Guise wanted to enter Scotland with three or four thousand French men.³⁸³

Hardly had Guise had time to contemplate James's response, when Mendoza informed Philip of James's attitude towards the enterprise. For Mendoza, it was clear that if the French alone decided to come into England or Scotland, Philip could not oppose it, because the French demand for the conversion of the Isle defending Mary's rights was as just as Philip's modern crusade. Thus, he recommended that money should be provided to Guise for him to develop a plan.³⁸⁴

New conferences were held in Paris with that purpose, although in an eerie atmosphere: the French King was suspicious of the house of Guise, because the French Catholics had begun showing preference to the Guises over the royal family, which could lead to a civil war in the country.³⁸⁵ Persons, the papal nuncio, Guise and Mayenne took part in the conference. This time, Thomas Morgan and Charles Paget

³⁷⁹ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 5 July 1583, E Leg. 838. fo. 86; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 510-2.

³⁸⁰ James VI, *Letters*, p. 49.

³⁸¹ Donaldson, *All the Queen's men*, pp. 144-5.

³⁸² James VI to the duke of Guise, 19 Aug. 1583. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 303-6.

³⁸³ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 16 July 1583, E Leg. 818, fos. 89-90; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 514-8.

³⁸⁴ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 16 July 1583, E Leg. 818, fos. 89-90; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 514-8.

³⁸⁵ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 16 July 1583, E Leg. 818, fos. 92-3; *CODOIN*, xcii, pp. 520-2.

were also admitted to participate. The result of the conference was a new memorial, which was sent to Spain and Rome.³⁸⁶

Persons was chosen to go to Rome to take the memorial to the Pope. Allen gave him a letter of recommendation and presentation for the Pope, in which he referred to the Jesuit as 'this best and most prudent father, who is one soul with us in the Lord and most expert in English affairs.' The Pope already knew of the terms of the conference by the nuncio in Paris, and warmly welcomed Persons. At once, he sent the bishop of Segovia and Father Taberna – the former nuncio of Paris – to the Spanish court to negotiate with Philip. At the same time, Charles Paget was appointed to go to England to try to learn how many Catholics would be effectively disposed to support the invading forces and which would be the best ports and locations for the troops to disembark. Paget had to convince the Catholics that the expedition was not an invasion nor a conquest, but a liberation of the country from the chains of the heresy and the restoration of the Catholic faith, that would elevate Mary to the English throne.

Once again, Philip was not disposed to be involved in any imminent military offensive, at least not in the current climate, and he made this clear to the nuncio, because he had received reports from Guise in which it was stated that the English Catholics were not so disposed to co-operate with a foreign invasion as had been suggested during the conferences.³⁸⁷ As a consequence, Persons's labours with the Pope in Rome seemed futile. The difficulties, however, were confined to the immediate invasion, because, the Pope had renewed the excommunication for Elizabeth and had appointed Allen as bishop of Durham and papal legate. The preparations for the invasion were only one step further.³⁸⁸

On 24 August, Persons wrote to Father Agarazi, explaining how useful the appointment of Allen as bishop of Durham was, because it was a very strategic bishopric on the frontier with Scotland.³⁸⁹ Even though the delay of Philip II to make

³⁸⁶ Parish, 'Robert Parsons and the English Counter-Reformation,' p. 30.

³⁸⁷ Eguiluz, *Persons*, p. 118.

³⁸⁸ Hicks, *Letters and Memorials of Father Robert Persons*, pp. lx-i.

³⁸⁹ *ibid.*, pp. 172-82.

a decision had led to the abandonment of the Paris project,³⁹⁰ Persons was travelling to Rome, sent by Guise, to negotiate the enterprise and to request money from the Pope to finance it. From the instructions given by Guise to Persons we can learn more about the plan:

Que todo bien considerado, y aviendo escrito la Reyna de Escocia, y dado aviso a los principales señores de aquel reyno, de Escocia, donde deve descender la armada de España, tandem se ha hecho resolucion que bastara que el Rey Catholico embie una armada de España...de quatro mil buenos soldados, si su Magestad no tuviere modo de embiar mayor armada. Pero es necesario que en la dicha armada se trayga dinero para pagar diez mil soldados de aquellas partes, por algunos meses, y coseletes, picas y arcabuzes para armar cinco mil soldados de aquella isla.³⁹¹

The chosen port for the landing of the Spanish armada was the port of 'the Pile of Fouldrey,' probably Foulney Island in Lancashire, where the Spaniards had been assured that they would be welcomed by the great number of Catholics of that region and some good mariners that would help guide them through the English waters. There, in the port, they believed that at least 20,000 men on horse would join the armada, plus another 16,000 sent by the Catholic nobles of the Isle (4,000 from Leonard Dacre; 3,000 from William Douglas, 9th earl of Morton; 3,000 from Robert Graham of Fintry; 3,000 from Thomas, 7th earl of Northumberland; 2,000 Robert Barton, of Over Barton; and 1,000 Charles Neville, 6th earl of Westmorland) plus those that the new bishop of Durham, Allen, would be able to raise further troops.

Mendoza would stay in England until everything was ready, and a few days before the enterprise, he should leave for Dunkirk to join the armada of Guise and go with him to England. To enable this, Philip and Parma would have to give a licence to the exiled English Catholics in the Spanish Netherlands to join the armada of Guise and the Pope would need to finance it.³⁹²

³⁹⁰ Parish, 'Robert Parsons and the English Counter-Reformation.' pp. 30-1.

³⁹¹ 'That with everything well considered, and having written to the Queen of Scots, and having given advice to the principal lords of that kingdom, of Scotland, where the Spanish Armada should land, also it a resolution has been taken that will be enough if the Catholic King [Philip II] sends an Armada from Spain...of four thousand good soldiers, if his Majesty would not have opportunity to send a bigger armada. But it is necessary that in the said Armada it is carried money to pay ten thousand soldiers of those lands for some months and corselets, pikes and harquebuses to arm five thousand soldiers of that Isle.' The duke of Guise to Persons, 22 Aug. 1583. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 307-11.

³⁹² *ibid.*, v, pp. 309-11.

Charles Paget carried similar instructions to England. His description of the plans were less detailed, possibly for fear of interception by English agents, and stressed that:

no se haze por otro fin y intención que por establecimiento de la fee y religión Catholica en Inglaterra, y para poner la Reyna de Escocia pacifica de la corona de Inglaterra, la qual de derecho le pertenece.³⁹³

As Martin and Parker have explained there can be little doubt that the fatal strategy prescribed for the expedition was dictated by Philip himself.³⁹⁴ This was confirmed by Sempill, who revealed how the Scottish Catholic nobility sent Robert Bruce to Spain to collect 5,040 crowns,³⁹⁵ that, once back in Scotland, should be kept safely to be used in 'this special time' by the nobility.³⁹⁶ Moreover, the Marques of Santa Cruz now put forward his own resolute scheme for the invasion of England, but Philip relegated the plan, possibly because he was already developing other strategies.³⁹⁷

All these actions by the Catholic forces caused such alarm in England that Walsingham, himself, was sent north at the end of August 1583.³⁹⁸ Walsingham, an

³⁹³ 'It is not done with any other aim or intention than for the establishment of the Catholic faith and religion in England, and to place the Queen of Scots peacefully in the English crown, which for right belongs to her.' Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 312-3.

³⁹⁴ Martin & Parker, *The Spanish Armada*, p. 13.

³⁹⁵ For many years not much was known about this money, but in a document dated 28 September 1627, Sempill mentioned 'that the 5,040 crowns, which were consigned over the provisions of the army of Flanders, should be consigned over the *alcabalas* [Spanish ancient taxes on sales] of Medina Sidonia, which not only assures the secret but the punctually of the payment.' SCA, 'Los papeles tocantes a Escocia,' 28 Sept. 1627, CA4/4/21; in May 1630, in another memorial to the Spanish monarch, the said colonel asked to: 'consignee the 5,040 crowns given as secret expenditures, by imposing two crowns on each page of the deeds that the general tax appraiser of the court clerks of Madrid, Valladolid and Granada do, that being for a limited time, not only would fill the expenditure imposed on the provisions of Flanders, but it will not take anything from the soldiers, and it will help to sustain the mission and secret intelligence without expenditure of the royal treasure to maintain the Catholic faith in Scotland.' SCA, Colonel W. Sempill to the count-duke of Olivares, 28 Sept. 1627, CA4/4/20. In a draft memorial dated of June 1631 Sempill advised: 'the said sustention of 5,040 crowns per year given not only to sustain the priests that hide themselves in the mountains and desserts of that kingdom, persecuted, and...also this money sustains five Scottish nobles that suffer prisons and confiscation of their possessions for being loyal to their Catholic faith.' SCA, 'Memorial presented by Colonel Semple to the King of Spain,' June 1631, CA4/6/5.

Finally, the last time that we read about this sum of money is in a letter of Andres de Rocas to colonel Sempill about Scotland and the Scottish mission, in February 1632 where it was written that 'in a consultation of the Council of State on the 8th of this month, it has been decided that from now onwards this payment [of 5,040 crowns] have to continue to be paid through the hands don Julio de Necoalde.' SCA, Andrés de Rocas to Colonel W. Sempill, Feb. 1632, CA4/7/2.

³⁹⁶ SCA, 'Clase de papeles del Coronel Sempill,' 15 Oct. 1620, CA4/3/13.

³⁹⁷ See S.J.E. Herrera Oria, 'Felipe II y el Marqués de Santa Cruz en la Empresa de Inglaterra, según los documentos del archivo de Simancas' (Facultad de Filosofia y Letras de la Universidad Central Madrid Ph.D. thesis, 1946), p. 11-35.

³⁹⁸ *CSP Scot.*, vi, pp. 538, 558.

ultra-Protestant who hated Mary, was sent to gain James for the English cause.³⁹⁹ But not even Walsingham's presence in Scotland made the Jesuits abandon the idea of a military action there. Persons travelled to Flanders on instructions from Parma, according to his *Memoirs*, because he wanted Parma's advice on affairs concerning the English and Scottish Catholics in Flanders. Persons's letters from this period narrated the new persecutions that Catholics were suffering. In effect, they were petitions to the General of the Jesuits to send more missionaries to the Isle, and to Philip II, asking for more money to support the cause.⁴⁰⁰ And when Father Hugh Owen went to Spain to make a last urgent appeal for help from Philip, in an interview convoked by Father Englefield, Philip was far more concerned with the turn of events in France and the possibility of another *entente* with the Guise faction. On 12 September 1583, Philip sent orders to Mendoza to keep the correspondence with Mary and with the Catholics of that kingdom, exhorting them to be united and firm in their ideas, but claiming that it was better to send men to Scotland to educate James VI and convert him to the Catholic faith.⁴⁰¹ Finally, the Jesuits had decided to give up on an invasion with Spanish forces, as the plan was too well known by the English government, so it was no longer viable.⁴⁰²

Still, Guise was persistent in his belief in the possibilities of success and, in the first week of November 1583, sent a letter to Tassis asking him to request from Philip a definitive resolution of the business, and a few days later, on 19 August,⁴⁰³ he sent Fintry, with a copy of the letter sent by James VI, to Guise indicating James's disposition to take part in the enterprise to liberate his mother. The envoy also informed Tassis that Guise wanted him to ask Philip for 12,000 crowns for a guard for James. But Tassis reminded Fintry and Guise that 4,000 crowns had already been sent to Scotland with Robert Bruce,⁴⁰⁴ and another 4,000 crowns had been given to Persons. Tassis declared that 'podria ser que parezciesse cosa de cebo esta disposicion del Rey de Escocia.'⁴⁰⁵

³⁹⁹ Donaldson, *All the Queen's men*, pp. 144-5.

⁴⁰⁰ Eguiluz, *Persons*, p. 121.

⁴⁰¹ Philip II to Mendoza, 12 Sept. 1583. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 314-5.

⁴⁰² Eguiluz, *Persons*, p. 122.

⁴⁰³ James VI to the duke of Guise, 19 Aug. 1583. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 303-6.

⁴⁰⁴ According to Sempill, they amounted 5,040 crowns. See for example SCA, 'Los papeles tocantes a Escocia,' 28 Sept. 1627, CA4/4/21.

⁴⁰⁵ 'This disposition of the King of Scotland could seem as bait.' Tassis to Philip II, 15 Nov. 1583. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 316-21.

It was also in November 1583 that Sir Francis Walsingham uncovered a plot that once again involved a Spanish invasion of England. For several months, a plan to attempt a direct surprise invasion of southern England, combined with Elizabeth's assassination, had been developed by Guise, Mary, the Jesuits and. Mendoza, with Philip's full support.⁴⁰⁶ This conspiracy is better known as the 'Throckmorton plot' because Francis Throckmorton – a Catholic cousin of Sir Nicholas Throckmorton, the English ambassador to France – was the messenger used by the plotters.⁴⁰⁷ The bearer was arrested for carrying letters to and from Mary, Mendoza and several great lords, and executed early next year.⁴⁰⁸

The Spanish ambassador, because of the Throckmorton affair, was called by the English government, on 9 January 1584, to be informed that he had to leave the country within a period of 15 days.⁴⁰⁹ By 30 January, Mendoza was on his way to France.⁴¹⁰

The duke of Alençon had died at the beginning of 1584, leaving the Huguenot Henry of Navarre as legal heir to the French throne; thus, Guise, as head of the Catholic 'Saint League,' became more concerned with the French succession than in the Anglo-Hibernian problems. James stopped looking for help on the continent, and having doubts concerning the ambiguous affairs of his mother, started negotiations with Elizabeth that would finish with an alliance between both countries.⁴¹¹

One result of the increasing opposition was that the Pope and the General decided, temporarily, not to send any more Jesuits to England; by the beginning of 1584 only Holt remained in Scotland.⁴¹²

⁴⁰⁶ Martin & Parker, *The Spanish Armada*, p. 80.

⁴⁰⁷ Tejón, 'The Embassy of Bernardino de Mendoza to England,' pp. 69-70.

⁴⁰⁸ Wernham, *Before the Armada*, p. 339, 364.

⁴⁰⁹ 'Relacion de lo sucedido en Inglaterra,' Dec. 1583. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 323-4.

⁴¹⁰ All the documents referring to this conspiracy are recorded in BL, 'Correspondence of don Bernardino de Mendoza,' Add. MS 48,027.

⁴¹¹ Parish, 'Robert Parsons and the English Counter-Reformation,' p. 32.

⁴¹² Eguiluz, *Persons*, p. 129.

CHAPTER II

The Road to the Spanish Armada, 1584-1588

James VI's *Ius Suum Conservare*,⁴¹³ 1584-1586

The Spanish plans to influence England and Scotland had not yet ripened at the time of Mendoza's expulsion from the London embassy. It was clear that Philip needed to avenge not only this offence, but also the damage caused to Spanish commerce by the English, and their assistance to his rebellious subjects in Flanders. Moreover, he hoped to eject Elizabeth from her throne and restore Catholicism on the Isle.⁴¹⁴

Mendoza, despite being away from the British Isles after 1584 and having under his responsibilities the French embassy, remained deeply involved with English and Scottish affairs, persisting in his almost obsessive efforts to liberate Mary. Mendoza, a zealous and devout Catholic, believed that Mary's cause was directed to the service of God and thus, to that of Spain. Philip, despite appearances to the contrary, was far from sharing Mendoza's religious crusading zeal.⁴¹⁵ He certainly exploited the religious dimension of his strategy to bring the entire British Isles within the sphere of his power. There were many ways in which Philip could try to encourage and support the Catholic religion on the Isle. Among the possible strategies, the rumours even included a possible Spanish marriage to the Queen of Scots.⁴¹⁶ However, excluding a military action, the option that still seemed most plausible and achievable was the conversion of the young King of Scotland to Catholicism. It was claimed in the *Spanish Calendar of State Papers* that in February 1584, James VI had sent a letter to the Pope promising that he would convert to Catholicism if the Pope offered him assistance.⁴¹⁷ Indeed, James had written to the Pope on 19 February, asking for aid and leaving the door open for his conversion to Catholicism.⁴¹⁸

⁴¹³ Right to preserve himself.

⁴¹⁴ Elder, *Influences*, p. 120.

⁴¹⁵ Kamen, *Philip of Spain*, p. 256.

⁴¹⁶ Mary Stewart to Monsieur de Mauvissiere, 26 Feb. 1584. Labanoff, *Lettres*, v, pp. 423-31.

⁴¹⁷ *CSP Span.*, iii, pp. 518-9.

⁴¹⁸ Theiner, *Annales*, iii, p. 806; Forbes-Leith, *Narratives*, p. 186 n.

Additionally, James VI had been in communication with the duke of Guise⁴¹⁹ and had expressed his sympathy for the desires of his French relatives.⁴²⁰ In fact, being far away from Scotland, the Pope and Guise could easily be deceived as to the real convictions of the ever-elusive James. However, even the Scottish Catholic lords, who were in constant contact with the King and knew of his ambiguity regarding to religion, were convinced that their opportunity had arrived.⁴²¹

In a letter from Edinburgh dated March 1584, Holt, the only Jesuit remaining in Scotland after the crisis which took place between the end of 1583 to the beginning of 1584, informed Philip II that James had shown a good disposition towards Catholicism and had requested his advice on many important matters. According to Holt, James VI hardly had enough money to pay his guard, and if he was not soon subsidised by a Catholic prince, he would have to turn to the Protestants. Furthermore, Holt assured Philip that James believed that he would not be able to succeed to the throne of England without the aid of the Catholic princes.⁴²² Holt also claimed that James was publicly displaying his Catholicism by enlisting 'his most faithful counsellors...the earls of Huntly, Crawford, and Montrose, and Morton, and Lords Herries Home, Gray, Colonel Stewart, commanding the guard and some others.'⁴²³ Moreover, through the month of April, Holt informed his correspondents on the continent, including Guise, of James's excellent disposition to becoming Catholic and his favour of the enterprise.⁴²⁴

On 14 March, Lord Seton had written to Pope that his master, James VI, had been reduced to extremity and had become forced to implore Philip II's aid, which had raised the hopes for his conversion to their most optimistic level.⁴²⁵ Guise believed that James was more disposed than ever to convert to Catholicism, and subsequently, that James might even support a Spanish landing in Scotland; a belief also shared by Cardinal Como. However, Allen did not agree and, on 16 April 1584, he sent a letter

⁴¹⁹ James VI to the duke of Guise, 19 Feb. 1584, printed in Theiner, *Annales*, iii, p. 802; James VI to the duke of Guise, 22 Jan. 1584. *ibid.*, iii, p. 801.

⁴²⁰ Elder, *Influences*, p. 121; Teulet, *Relations*, v, p. 304.

⁴²¹ Elder, *Influences*, pp. 121-2.

⁴²² Quoted from Archives S.J. Latin MS by Forbes-Leith, *Narratives*, p. 186; Elder, *Influences*, p. 122.

⁴²³ Letter of Holt, 20 Mar. 1584, printed in Forbes-Leith, *Narratives*, pp. 188-92.

⁴²⁴ Letter of Holt, from Edinburgh, 1 and 7 Apr. 1584. *ibid.*, pp. 193-5.

⁴²⁵ Lord Seton to the Pope, 14 Mar. 1584. *ibid.*, pp. 186-8; M. Lee, 'King James's Popish Chancellor,' in Cowan & Shown, *Renaissance and Reformation in Scotland*, p. 172.

to Como and a memorandum to the Pope, wherein he expressed how inconvenient it would be to start the enterprise in Scotland. Firstly, Scotland was further away from Spain than England, and the fleet would be exposed to an English assault. Even once they had landed in Scotland, they would have to gain control of this kingdom and, only then, would they be able to march on to England.⁴²⁶

Tassis agreed with Allen's point of view. Thus, on 18 April, he sent a dispatch to Philip concerning the enterprise of England, thereby bypassing Mendoza, who, among his multiple tasks in France, was more tightly entwined with English and Mary's affairs. Tassis reminded the Spanish monarch that if the enterprise was aiming for 'the reduction of England and to liberate the Queen of Scotland,' the armies should disembark in England, not Scotland. To support his advice, the ambassador explained that if they went down to England with a Scottish army the English would treat it as an invasion by the Scots themselves, because of the 'natural' hate between the two nations. Nevertheless, he recognised that Scotland offered some advantages, as for example a secure landing; thus, he proposed a possible small force sent from Scotland to liberate Mary, but not to conquer the Isle. This plan had been inspired, or maybe presented, by an ambassador from Scotland who had visited him two days earlier. This ambassador's mission was to obtain from Philip 12,000 crowns to:

formar milicia en Escocia, que no puede dexar de hazerse, en esto parece que no sería inconveniente yr con moderacion...sospecho que tienen intencion de que lleve el Rey de Escocia el exercito en persona, y entre con el en Inglaterra...muestra el dicho Rey de Escocia, sin duda, muy buena inclinación de bolver al buen camino...⁴²⁷

As we have seen, the opinions about James's good will towards Catholicism were discordant. James had to convince the still sceptical Philip, and subsequently the Pope, of his good inclination, and at the end of April 1584, Lord Seton, arrived in France via England. M. de Castelnau claimed, in a dispatch to the King of France, that Lord Seton had gone as a bearer of great news from James VI to Philip II.⁴²⁸

⁴²⁶ Knox, *Letters and Memorials of Cardinal Allen*, ii, pp. 231-2.

⁴²⁷ 'form an army in Scotland, which cannot be left without being done. In this, it seems that it would be inconvenient to go with moderation...I suspect that they have intention that the King of Scotland in person would be who would lead the army, and enter with it in England...the said King of Scotland shows, without doubt, very good inclination to return to the good path.' Tassis to Philip II, 18 Apr. 1584. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 325-34.

⁴²⁸ M. de Castelnau to the King, 26 Apr. 1584. Teulet, *Relations*, iii, pp. 261-5.

In May, Tassis had been visited by Seton and Beaton, who had urged him to report to the Spanish King that rebels of Scotland had just taken Stirling, in a rising instigated by Elizabeth.⁴²⁹ Furthermore, that the Ruthven lords had attempted to recover control of Scotland, however, this time they failed and fled to England. After the ‘Stirling raid,’ which ended with the death of the earl of Gowrie, and James gaining control of the country, new hopes for the Catholics for a restoration of their faith within the realm had been raised. Without wasting time, Beaton sent Doctor James Cheyne to Scotland to ‘work for the faith’ in the realm and wrote to Gregory XIII, requesting him to send some priests belonging to the Jesuit order and of Scottish birth, referring specifically to Fathers Hay, Gordon, Tyrie and Crichton.⁴³⁰

Persons was also urging Tassis to report to Philip that the Scots were disappointed with his delay in taking action in Scotland, and that they were considering making other possible allies, in particular the French.⁴³¹ However, Philip, in his usual manner, preferred not to take action on behalf of Scotland; and on 29 June 1584, the Spanish monarch ordered Tassis to confirm to the Scottish ambassadors that he would try to provide money for payment of James’s guards. But Philip ordered Tassis that:

y si os diere aquel papel con offrezcimiento de apartarse de la liga y federación de Francia, y hazerla conmigo, me le embiareys, pero no haveys de solicitarlo vos, si dexarle entrar de suyo, y encargaros solamente referir lo que os dixere.⁴³²

It was clear that Philip did not believe that he should take military action and as Father Englefield wrote: ‘nothing in dede in meant from Spayne.’⁴³³ However, his hostile intentions against England were clear.⁴³⁴

However, Mary, who had never ceased in trying to get Spanish aid for Scotland, must have thought that it was a propitious time to contact Philip and, on 22 May, she wrote to Monsieur de Mauvissiere from her prison in Sheffield, expressing her sincere

⁴²⁹ Tassis to Philip II, 27 May 1584. *ibid.*, v, pp. 336-7.

⁴³⁰ Beaton to the Pope, Gregory XIII, 25 June 1584, printed in Forbes-Leith, *Narratives*, pp. 196-8.

⁴³¹ Tassis to Philip II, 27 May 1584. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 336-7.

⁴³² ‘and if he [James VI] would give you that paper offering to leave the league and federation with France, and make a league with me, you will send it to me, but you should not ask for it, but let him do it himself, and just inform me of what he says to you.’ Philip II to Tassis, 29 June 1584. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 338.

⁴³³ Hicks, *Letters and Memorials of Father Robert Persons*, pp. 224, 246, 249.

⁴³⁴ Henry III to M. de Castelnau. Teulet, *Relations*, iii, pp. 277-82.

affection towards Philip.⁴³⁵ It was likely that Mary had been informed that James VI had started a campaign to mould Elizabeth's opinion by appointing the earl of Arran as Chancellor in replace of Andrew Melville, who had gone into exile in England.⁴³⁶

Elizabeth, increasingly concerned about King James's conduct, sent Lord Hunsdon to Berwick in July 1584. There, he would discuss with Arran – James's emissary – the prosecution of Elizabeth's friends in Scotland; James's refusal to allow banished Scots entry to England; his failure to turn over the Jesuits and other fugitives to Elizabeth's officers; his dealings with the Pope, Spain and France;⁴³⁷ and finally, his secret negotiations with his mother.⁴³⁸

By the end of June, James had become convinced that a rapprochement with England was necessary. Elder offered two reasons for this: firstly, the increasing influence of Patrick, the master of Gray, who regarded the Catholic enterprise as futile; and secondly, the death of the duke of Anjou, leaving open the succession for the Huguenot Henry of Navarre. Moreover, this had provoked a reconciliation of Guise with Spain.⁴³⁹ In fact, James was now acting under the influence of Arran, Lennox's rival and successor, who was a professed Protestant. The 'Black Acts' of 1584 had made him supreme within the ecclesiastical system of Scotland, where he hoped to introduce Episcopacy similar to the English system. All these reasons drew James closer towards England, and he decided to send Gray as his envoy to Elizabeth.⁴⁴⁰

On 15 August 1584, Guy de Fontenay, the ambassador of the King of France to Scotland, wrote to Mary asking her to contact Philip II on behalf of Colonel Stewart. Fontenay had obtained assurances from Stewart promising that he would surrender all the companies in the States under his command to Parma.⁴⁴¹ According to Fontenay,

⁴³⁵ Mary Stewart to Monsieur de Mauvissiere, 22 May 1584. Labanoff, *Lettres*, v, pp. 468-74.

⁴³⁶ BL, 'Letter of 9 June 1584,' Cott. MS Calig., cviii, fo. 58; James VI, *Letters*, p. 53; Andrew Melville was the principal of St Mary's College. See T. McCrie, *Andrew Melville* (Edinburgh, 1899).

⁴³⁷ See for example M. de Castelnau to the Queen of France, 28 Aug. 1584. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 302-5.

⁴³⁸ *CSP Scot.*, vii, p. 190.

⁴³⁹ Elder, *Influences*, p. 123.

⁴⁴⁰ *Letters and Papers relating to Patrick Master of Gray, afterwards seventh Lord Gray* (Bannatyne Club, 1835), pp. 1-44; Calderwood, *History*, iv, pp. 171-91, 253.

⁴⁴¹ It should be noted that, just a few months later, David Boyd, a colonel under the command of Stewart, betrayed his garrison in the city of Bruges by joining the forces of the duke of Parma, who seized the city. See SCA, 'Patentes of Colonel David Boyd,' 1584, CA4/9/1.

Stewart would also promise loyalty to Philip if the King would restore his wife's states, which had been confiscated from her during the war in the Low Countries. Fontenay also claimed that Stewart already had letters of support from Parma and from Guise.⁴⁴²

Clearly, the English and the Dutch were indeed worried about this plot, and increased their security, working side by side. This cooperation resulted in the capture of the Scottish Jesuit Crichton in September 1584. Crichton, arrested by the Dutch whilst at sea, was taken first to Ostend, and then immediately transported to England, where he was thrown into the Tower. At the time of his capture, he attempted to destroy the compromising documents that he had carried from Flanders, but without success; thus, he gave his captors the most exact information as to the plans of the Catholic enemies.⁴⁴³ The evidence of the plan to liberate Mary was a letter from her to Allen claiming that she had her son's 'great and truly filial affection' and his promise to obey her 'always and in all things.' This letter was given to study to the master of Gray.⁴⁴⁴

Immediately, Persons wrote two letters to Mary.⁴⁴⁵ In the first one, dated in Rouen on 10 October 1584, Persons informed Mary that Allen and himself were desperate because of their lack of funding, and that they had asked for instructions from Spain to go to see Parma about the role of the Low Countries in the enterprise. Parma was now their only hope. If he supported the invasion, Philip II would take part. However, Mary would have to confirm that she was ready to marry Parma. Persons believed that this marriage would benefit both, and recommended that the Queen should escape from her prison and go to France, because her life could be in danger if the Spanish invasion finally took place.⁴⁴⁶

Allen and Persons decided to treat the matter with Charles Paget and Thomas Morgan, leaders of the Catholics in exile and representatives of Mary, to avoid disunity and

⁴⁴² HMC *Salisbury*, ii, p. 52.

⁴⁴³ Knox, *Letters and Memorials of Cardinal Allen*, ii, pp. 425-32.

⁴⁴⁴ Elder, *Influences*, p. 124.

⁴⁴⁵ Eguluz comments that both letters were deciphered by Phelippes, under the direct service of Walsingham; clearly, the English government had immediate knowledge of these affairs. Eguluz, *Persons*, p. 129.

⁴⁴⁶ Hicks, *Letters and Memorials of Father Robert Persons*, pp. 246-52, 269-70.

dispersion of forces. However, Paget and Morgan had already informed Mary that Allen, Persons, and Englefield had once again not consulted them about her affairs. At the same time, Paget and Morgan were discrediting the name of Spain and all those who supported or aided Spanish intervention, by assuring that it was indeed to be an 'invasion,' not a 'crusade against the heretics.' They referred to Allen, Persons, Englefield and the rest of the group, as 'the confederates of the Spanish.' They emphasised that Mary hated the idea of this invasion and those who supported it. Furthermore, they wrote to William Parry, a spy of Elizabeth, asking him to inform the Queen about the plans that were being discussed for the invasion of England. They assured Parry that the plot included the promotion of a rebellion in Mary's favour and even Elizabeth's assassination.⁴⁴⁷

Elizabeth and the English government were seriously alarmed by this news. Moreover, they had been informed by John Sommer of the talk that he had with Mary, when they were riding from Sheffield to Wingfield. The key points of this conversation were:

As to the Enterprise you speak of (quoth she) I know not nor have heard any thing of it, nor so, God have my sowle, will ever consent to any King, that shuld troble this state, wherof I seeke now the quyete with all my hart, for if any unquietnes shuld happen heer. It wold be said to my charge, and so might I be in greater danger... Then did I ask her of any offer of Spayne she said merely, so as her son might have the Low Countreys with all, it wer not amisse. But who can warrant that (quoth she). But truely (said she) I know of none there.⁴⁴⁸

Elizabeth was still considering a collaboration treaty with the States against Spain,⁴⁴⁹ but by October, she showed herself in favour of signing an alliance against Spain, this time with France.⁴⁵⁰ Elizabeth knew her propositions would be welcomed in France, where there were rumours of intelligence between James VI and Philip II concerning James's conversion to Catholicism to facilitate the marriage of the Scot with Philip's youngest daughter.⁴⁵¹ A union between Spain and England would break the balance of power in Europe, something that France could not permit.

⁴⁴⁷ Eguiluz, *Persons*, p. 273.

⁴⁴⁸ BL, 'Talk betweene the Scottish Queene and John Sommer. ryding from Sheffield to Wingfeld,' 2 Sept. 1584, Stowe MS 158, fos. 7-10.

⁴⁴⁹ M. de Castelnau to Henry III, 3 Sept. 1584. Teulet, *Relations*, iii, pp. 305-10.

⁴⁵⁰ M. de Castelnau to the Henry III, 26 Oct. 1584. *ibid.*, iii, pp. 315-9.

⁴⁵¹ M. de Castelnau to the Queen of France, 18 Oct. 1584. *ibid.*, iii, pp. 310-1.

By October, James had decided that it would be much more in his interest to provide Elizabeth with some satisfaction, probably because of the Anglo-French alliance. Firstly, he declared that he was against the ‘association’ proposed by Mary in 1581, under which she and her son would share sovereignty of Scotland.⁴⁵² Secondly, he sent Patrick, master of Gray, as his ambassador to Elizabeth to let her know that he was prepared to abandon his mother in order to secure an Anglo-Scottish alliance.⁴⁵³ However, on 29 October 1584, Hay wrote in a letter to Father Claude Aquaviva, General of the Society of Jesus, that ‘the King [of Scotland] had been already subverted by our Fathers, and heard the mass every day.’⁴⁵⁴

Conversely, on 31 December 1584, Philip II, in an attempt to counteract England’s alliance with France, became part of the association whose viable head was Guise.⁴⁵⁵ The Treaty of Joinville, signed in January 1585, completed the alliance between Spain and the Guises. Philip feared Mary’s ‘Frenchness’ and but he also knew that being closer to the Guises, he would be closer to her.⁴⁵⁶ Nevertheless, on 5 February, Allen informed Mary that Parma, Hay, Hugh Owen and Allen himself had been charged with organising the enterprise of England and Scotland.⁴⁵⁷ There was no mention of Guise, which obviously provoked Mary to concentrate her efforts on dealing with Philip and Parma. However, the candidature of Henry of Navarre to the French throne, captured Philip’s attention.⁴⁵⁸

On 5 April 1585, Mendoza reported that James VI was resisting pressure from Elizabeth to join in an intervention in the Low Countries.⁴⁵⁹ Mary was at the time attempting to get her son to join her proposed ‘association.’⁴⁶⁰ However, when Sir Lewis Bellenden, James’s ambassador to London, took over the negotiations begun

⁴⁵² See PRO, ‘Letter of James VI,’ July 1584, SP 53/12/37; James VI, *Letters*, pp. 55-6; see also BL, ‘Letters concerning Mary Queen of Scots,’ 1585-6, Add. MS 32,092.

⁴⁵³ PRO, Lord Burghley to William Cecil, 14 Oct. 1585, SP 52/36/85; BL, Add. MS 48,027, fos. 248-9; James VI, *Letters*, pp. 58-9; however, still in April 1585, Mendoza was reporting that Mary was still to sound out her son James to join the ‘association.’ Mendoza to Philip II, 5 Apr. 1585. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 339-42.

⁴⁵⁴ Forbes-Leith, *Narratives*, pp. 198-201.

⁴⁵⁵ Guilday, *The English Catholic Refugees*, p. 71 n.

⁴⁵⁶ Jensen, *Diplomacy and Dogmatism*, p. 89.

⁴⁵⁷ BL, Allen to Mary Stewart, 5 Feb. 1585, Add. MS 48,027, fo. 534; on the English suspicions of a Spanish invasion of England scheme through Scotland see J.S. Corbett (ed.), *Papers relating to the Navy during the Spanish War, 1585-1587* (NRS, 1898), p. 61.

⁴⁵⁸ Parker, ‘Felipe II’ in Villari & Parker, *La Política de Felipe II*, pp. 74-5.

⁴⁵⁹ *CSP Span.*, iii, p. 536; *CSP Scot.*, viii, pp. 360-3.

by Gray, it was clear that there was a real prospect of an Anglo-Scottish accord. James feared that the Ruthven lords might try to seize him again and looked for Elizabeth's protection.⁴⁶¹ Thus, Elizabeth sent Sir Edward Wotton to the Scottish court, to negotiate the Anglo-Scottish league for the defence of the Protestant religion.

Meanwhile, on 21 May, Philip received a letter from Mary, via Mendoza, dated 21 April, expressing her fear that her son would never become a Catholic. Thus, if James did not convert to Catholicism before her death, she would disinherit him, and declare Philip her heir to the Scottish and English thrones. 'I am obliged in this matter,' she wrote, 'to consider the public welfare of the Church before the private aggrandisement of my own posterity.'⁴⁶² Philip had already been called king of England as 'consort king' of Mary Tudor;⁴⁶³ and, moreover, he was himself descended from Edward III through John of Gaunt.⁴⁶⁴ Also, the appointment on 24 April 1585, of Gregory XIII as Pope, a much more belligerent person than his predecessor, could lead to a much more vigorous action against England.⁴⁶⁵

This way, the two sides were closing lines on the international stage. On 29 April, the States of Utrecht declared to Elizabeth their desire to be free from Philip II's tyranny, and to place themselves under her protection.⁴⁶⁶ On 10 May, the King of Navarre, afraid of the Guise's actions against him in France, sent a letter to James VI with his ambassador, M. de Ségur. In the letter, Henry of Navarre informed James that Philip and the Pope had signed a league against the Protestants, and called on him for a union for the common defence for the Protestant princes.⁴⁶⁷ It was not surprising that Henry of Navarre was worried; only a few days later it became known that Philip had signed a league with the dukes of Savoy and Ferrara, the Catholic Guises, the duke of Bavaria and the archduke of Cologne, to extirpate all the heretics from France.⁴⁶⁸ Obviously, these events also worried James and the negotiations of Bellenden were carried a stage further at the end of May, when Edward Wotton arrived in Edinburgh

⁴⁶⁰ Mendoza to Philip II, 5 Apr. 1585. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 339-42.

⁴⁶¹ EUL, James VI to Sir Lewis Bellenden, 12 Apr. 1585, Laing MS. I:12; James VI, *Letters*, pp. 60-2.

⁴⁶² *CSP Span.*, iii, p. 581; Parker, *The Grand Strategy*, p. 191.

⁴⁶³ See p. 3 of this thesis.

⁴⁶⁴ Hicks, *Letters and Memorials of Father Robert Persons*, p. 308.

⁴⁶⁵ Eguiluz, *Persons*, p. 131; Guilday, *The English Catholic Refugees*, p. 71 n.

⁴⁶⁶ PRO, 'Powers by the Estates of Utrecht to Paul Buys,' 1585, E 30/1160.

⁴⁶⁷ Henry of Navarre to James VI, 10 May 1585. Teulet, *Relations*, iii, pp. 331-3.

⁴⁶⁸ Father la Rue to Mary Stewart, 18 May 1585. *ibid.*, iii, pp. 341-8.

to arrange an alliance, both offensive and defensive, between England, Scotland, and other Protestant powers.

On 27-8 May, Patrick Gray claimed that Scotland was levying 15,000 men in the following twenty days to embark for the States.⁴⁶⁹ At the same time, Elizabeth was tempting James with very generous offers.⁴⁷⁰ Even though in mid-July a large number of soldiers had been mobilized, Mendoza informed Philip II that Edward Wotton, the English ambassador, was still trying to convince James to send more troops to protect the rebels of Holland and Zealand in order to be in the favour of Elizabeth.⁴⁷¹ Mendoza also reported, a few days later, that around 300 or 400 Scotsmen had disembarked in the Netherlands.⁴⁷² Additionally, the lords had asked for reprisals against Spain in a meeting of the English Council held on 9 July.⁴⁷³

Obviously, Philip II was seriously concerned about this news. Walsingham believed that because of the Spanish monarch's 'inclination to peace' he would not embark on an enterprise against England.⁴⁷⁴ However, Geoffrey Parker claimed that it was in this summer of 1585, when the decision to launch a Great Armada against England took tangible form in Philip's mind.⁴⁷⁵ On 18 July, Philip declared in a letter to Mendoza that he had decided that Mary and her party should be supported and financed. Thus, he wrote:

She [Mary Queen of Scots] certainly has risen very greatly in my estimation, in consequence of what she there says, and has increased the devotion I have ever felt to her interests, not so much because of what she says in my favour (although I am very grateful for that also), as because she postpones her love for her son [James VI of Scotland], which might be expected to lead her astray, for the service of Our Lord, the common good of Christendom, and particularly for that of England. You may tell her all this for me, and assure her that, if she

⁴⁶⁹ *CSP Span.*, iii, pp. 399-400, 405.

⁴⁷⁰ Walsingham offered James £6,000 sterling for his alliance. *CSP Scot.*, viii, p. 656; J. Goodare, 'James VI's English Subsidy,' in Goodare & Lynch, *The Reign of James VI*, p. 113.

⁴⁷¹ Mendoza to Philip II, 16 July 1585. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 342-5.

⁴⁷² *CSP Span.*, iii, p. 595.

⁴⁷³ BL, 'Original Letters and Papers chiefly relating to Admiralty affairs,' July 1585, Add. MS 12,505, fo. 3.

⁴⁷⁴ Walsyngham to Wotton, 19 July 1585. *Hamilton Papers*, ii, p. 661.

⁴⁷⁵ Parker, 'Felipe II' in Villari & Parker, *La Política de Felipe II*, p. 77; J. Calvar claimed that Philip's decision to attack England was made in Tortosa on 29 Dec. 1585. J. Calvar 'Nueva Colección Documental de las Hostilidades entre España e Inglaterra, 1568-1604,' in Cruickshank & Gallagher (eds.), *God's Obvious Design: papers for the symposium with an edition and translation of the account of Francisco de Cuellar* (London, 1990), p. 75.

perseveres in the good path she has chosen, I hope that God will bless her by placing her in possession of her own.⁴⁷⁶

Adding an order to give her four thousand crowns in addition to the four thousand Mendoza had already paid her. After all, James VI was refusing to adopt the Spanish stance openly; even though there was a fairly strong Catholic party in Scotland the Protestants were in power. Moreover, many in the Netherlands were unhappy about the implications of the English intervention, and the last thing they wanted was to have the Scots sending troops as well.⁴⁷⁷

Meanwhile, the treaty negotiations between England and Scotland were badly upset by the assassination of Lord Russell on 27 July, during a meeting between the English and Scottish wardens of the Middle March, which nearly jeopardized the good relations between Elizabeth and James.⁴⁷⁸ The Protestants had been concerned with the Protestant earl of Arran's increasing power, since he was appointed Chancellor of Scotland. Lord Russell's death was a way for Elizabeth and her ministers to dispose of the earl of Arran. Thus, her ambassador in Edinburgh accused the Chancellor of complicity in Russell's assassination. James ordered the arrest and imprisonment of the earl of Arran in St Andrews Castle, which greatly pleased Elizabeth. Subsequently, treaty negotiations continued.⁴⁷⁹ But only a few days after his imprisonment, Arran was permitted to leave for his house in Ayrshire. On 24 August, the English ambassador claimed that James was not capable of dealing with the earl of Arran and that there was not point in concluding an alliance.⁴⁸⁰ However, Elizabeth decided to continue the negotiations for the Anglo-Scottish alliance, maybe because they had already signed an alliance with the States General on 20 August 1585,⁴⁸¹ thus, she would be able to create a solid Protestant league. The negotiations for the Anglo-Scottish treaty dragged on into September.⁴⁸² Finally, Arran had his titles and

⁴⁷⁶ *CSP Span.*, iii, p. 590.

⁴⁷⁷ Parker, *The Grand Strategy*, p. 179.

⁴⁷⁸ See for example, James VI, *Letters*, p. 64.

⁴⁷⁹ *ibid.*, p. 65

⁴⁸⁰ *CSP Scot.*, viii, p. 94.

⁴⁸¹ Parker, *The Army of Flanders*, p. 243.

⁴⁸² 'Avisos de Inglaterra de 19 de septiembre 1585.' Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 344-6.

offices removed, and went into exile.⁴⁸³ At the end of October the defensive league with England was concluded.⁴⁸⁴

The Jesuits, the Catholic ‘defenders,’ were ready to counter the Protestant threat. Allen and a young priest called Morrice went to Rome, supposedly to ‘take the waters,’⁴⁸⁵ and Persons followed them, supposedly on a pilgrimage.⁴⁸⁶ They had collaborated in a genealogical study, trying to prove that, by his descent from Edward III, Philip II had after Mary more rights to the English throne than any other Catholic prince. Persons and Allen had sent the document to Philip for him to study.⁴⁸⁷ Both Jesuits believed that the power of Spain was the only hope for England’s saviour from heresy. At this time, their interest for Mary was decreasing. Later in his life Persons declared that:

I once more repeat: the one thing and first of all that I look for in our future ruler is that he be a true Catholic; let him be of what nation, race, or language he will; and if he be not this or be doubtful, I will regard neither his country nor his person, nor any kind of hereditary claim which I cannot admit against the cause of God, although otherwise most valid.⁴⁸⁸

Gradually they abandoned their efforts to convert James to Catholicism, and decided to completely support Philip’s aspirations.⁴⁸⁹

The Pope had already been informed that James’s intentions were to ally with Elizabeth.⁴⁹⁰ Persons and Allen went to Rome in order to begin negotiations with the Pope, so that Philip could be declared the heir to Mary’s rights to the throne of England. On 30 September 1585, a week after starting their travels, the Jesuits were noticed by the English. Thomas Rogers wrote to the Secretary Walsingham:

Doctor Allen and one Morrice a priest are gone to Rome. Parsons has followed them; if it be discovered he wishes it to be given out that he is on pilgrimage, but his going is to further the invasion of England this winter.⁴⁹¹

⁴⁸³ James VI, *Letters*, pp. 66-7.

⁴⁸⁴ *CSP Scot.*, viii, pp. 128-9.

⁴⁸⁵ Guilday, *The English Catholic Refugees*, p. 71 n.

⁴⁸⁶ *CSP Eliz.*, xx, p. 703.

⁴⁸⁷ G. Mattingly, *The Defeat of the Spanish Armada* (London, 1970), p. 72; Eguiluz, *Persons*, p. 141.

⁴⁸⁸ Persons to Crichton, from Seville, 10 May 1596, printed in Tauton, *History of the Jesuits*, pp. 174-6.

⁴⁸⁹ Parish, ‘Robert Parsons and the English Counter-Reformation,’ p. 35.

⁴⁹⁰ NLS, letter to the Pope titled ‘Il presente state of Scotia,’ 1585, ADV MS 31.4.15.

⁴⁹¹ *CSP Eliz.*, xx, p. 703.

However, as Astrain claimed, Gregory XIII's successor was more suspicious of the Spanish power and did not hesitate in showing his doubts concerning the motives that induced Philip to invade England.⁴⁹² Philip had given orders to his ambassador in Rome, the count of Olivares, with the aid of Father Caraffa – a pro-Spanish Cardinal – to persuade Sixtus V that the enterprise against England was being prepared, not to for any particular benefit for Spain, nor to secure a route to the Indies nor to resolve the problem of the Netherlands, but for the exclusive benefit of the Catholic faith, and that James's conversion was not possible nor wise.⁴⁹³ However, the Pope, suspicious of such offers, informed Olivares that he had decided not to give them any money for the enterprise unless this money would be used only for the good of Catholicism. Persons claimed that:

but what Your Reverence said at Rome in the year 1586 I think, and has often been repeated, was nothing could be decided until we had some firm proof of the King's mind, which your Reverence promised to procure us, as you were then about, with others to set off for Scotland.⁴⁹⁴

The Pope wanted to hear both sides, and decided to send a group of Jesuits to Scotland to inform him on the state of the realm. 'Their names are said to be Holt, Englishman, Messrs Frosomont, Frenchman, William Lange and Alexander Macquhorne [McQuhirrie], Scotsmen, all priests clad in black.'⁴⁹⁵ They entered the realm through the port of Leith, on a ship in the company of the French ambassador to Scotland, D'Anville, on 13 January 1586.⁴⁹⁶ Their first report reached the Spanish embassy in France by the end of January. Mendoza informed Philip II that these Jesuit fathers were working very hard for the faith in Scotland but, because of the poverty they were suffering, found themselves forced to ask the Spanish King for money to be able to continue the 'holy enterprise.'⁴⁹⁷ Since Mendoza had left London, the range of information available to him had diminished, mainly being derived from over-optimistic and unreliable reports from missionaries. Moreover, his most influential friend among the diplomats based in Paris was James Beaton, archbishop of Glasgow

⁴⁹² Astrain, *Historia de la Compañía de Jesús en la Asistencia de España*, iii (Madrid, 1925), pp. 453-75.

⁴⁹³ AGS, Philip II to the count of Olivares, without date, E Rome, Leg. 946; Martin & Parker, *The Spanish Armada*, p. 89.

⁴⁹⁴ Persons to Crichton, from Seville, 10 May 1586. Tauton, *History of the Jesuits*, pp. 174-6.

⁴⁹⁵ Scrope to Walsingham, 3 Feb. 1585-6. Knox, *Records*, ii. p. 25.

⁴⁹⁶ Widdrington to Walsingham, 16 and 31 Jan. 1585-6. *ibid.*, p. 25.

⁴⁹⁷ Mendoza to Philip II, 1 Feb. 1586. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 347-8.

and a devoted follower of Mary; this friendship only exacerbated Mendoza's obsession with affairs dealing with England and Scotland, and in particular with Mary's liberation, which would be followed by an invasion of the Isle.⁴⁹⁸

The Spaniards and the Jesuits were anxious for a resolution from the Pope on his collaboration in the enterprise. Thus, Olivares re-approached the Pope with a memorandum, in which Philip II expressed his desire 'to reduce the country to obedience to the Catholic Church and place the crown in possession of the Queen of Scots, who so well deserved it for having remained firm in the faith through so many calamities.' However, it was argued that in the case of Mary's death, a new heir should be appointed, because her son was a declared Protestant. Obviously, Philip was in everybody's mind, but there was no explicit mention of his candidature. Nevertheless, the memorandum finished with a petition for two million gold crowns for the enterprise, because his resources had seriously diminished since the long wars in the Netherlands.⁴⁹⁹

The Pope gave his response to Philip through Olivares. Unfortunately, he could not fulfil Philip's requests, but he could offer him a subsidy of 200,000 gold crowns, which would be paid as soon as Philip's armada left for the Isle. 100,000 more as soon as the troops landed, and a final sum of another 100,000 gold crowns six months after they disembarked. Also, there would be a payment of 200,000 crowns yearly as long as the war against Protestantism was still being fought on the Isle.⁵⁰⁰ Henry III of France declared that he did not believe Philip was planning to invade England for the benefit of James VI, whatever the Pope said; moreover, he proclaimed that the Spaniards were not monks that could be compelled by the Pope to give up what they had conquered by their arms.⁵⁰¹

James's final goal was the English succession; and, in early March 1586, the Anglo-Scottish treaty was still being discussed, although James was dissatisfied with some of the terms, because there was no explicit reference to him being declared heir to the

⁴⁹⁸ Jensen, *Diplomacy and Dogmatism*, pp. 98-9.

⁴⁹⁹ Elder, *Influences*, pp. 126-7; *CSP Span.*, iii, p. 326; see also B.F. Wiesman, 'Father Robert Parsons, S.J.,' *CHR*, vi (1926), p. 420.

⁵⁰⁰ Elder, *Influences*, p. 127.

⁵⁰¹ H.G. Koenigsberger, *Politicians and Virtuosi. Essays in early modern history* (London, 1986), p.

English throne. Moreover, he was only rewarded with £4,000, instead of the £5,000 that had been negotiated before. Nevertheless, it seemed that the treaty was finally going to be signed.⁵⁰²

The final negotiations of the Anglo-Scottish treaty, Leicester's campaign in the Low Countries, Francis Drake's continuous attacks on the Spanish interests,⁵⁰³ coincided with the resubmission of the plan by the Marquis of Santa Cruz for an invasion of the Isle. His plans required 510 ships and 94,222 men, at supposed total cost of 3,8000,000 crowns. As Martin and Parker have explained, the Marquis of Santa Cruz 'deliberately overestimated the requirements to allow for the probability that they would later be scaled down.'⁵⁰⁴ This plan was forwarded by Philip to don Juan de Zuñiga, who forwarded further to be studied by don Bernardino de Escalante, a priest and former soldier with a knowledge of navigation. Escalante read the documents and created an alternative proposal based on Cruz's plan, which involved a fleet leaving from Lisbon for Scotland, where they would reassemble to launch the attack. Shortly, he dismissed the idea of landing in Scotland, in favour of southern Ireland to draw off the Royal Navy, while the Spanish troops from the Netherlands would land, with surprise, in Kent and march to London.⁵⁰⁵ Escalante sent his plan to Zuñiga, who being fascinated by Escalante's ideas, forwarded it to Philip, suggesting not only that in case of victory the throne of England should be given to Mary,⁵⁰⁶ but that Mary should marry a Catholic prince, recommending Parma.⁵⁰⁷ Philip agreed with this ambitious plan, which implied that Santa Cruz would have to take control of the Channel, after which Parma would lead his troops in a landing and invasion of the Isle. But, this involved dividing the command, and created a loss of co-ordination and force.⁵⁰⁸

93.

⁵⁰² James VI to Elizabeth I, 10 May 1586. James VI, *Letters*, pp. 60-70.

⁵⁰³ BL, 'Summary of answers to complains of Spain against England as to intercepting of treasure and the depredations of Sir Francis Drake,' Stowe MS 177, xii, fo. 85; LNMM, Sir William Munson, 'Yearly observations of the English and Spanish fleets from the year 1585 to the year 1602,' LEC/1, fo. 123.

⁵⁰⁴ Martin & Parker, *The Spanish Armada*, pp. 91-3.

⁵⁰⁵ Parker, *The Grand Strategy*, pp. 186-7.

⁵⁰⁶ Villari & Parker, *La Politica de Felipe II*, p. 23.

⁵⁰⁷ Parker, *The Grand Strategy*, p. 186.

⁵⁰⁸ *ibid.*, pp. 186-8.

At the beginning of April, Henry III had been contacted by Huntly, Lord Maxwell and Lord Claude Hamilton, requesting his assistance. In two letters dated 18 and 30 April, Henry confessed to M. d'Esneval that he believed that if he refused to aid the Scottish Catholics, they would approach Philip II.⁵⁰⁹ Henry had also been visited by Mendoza, who had tried to 'soften the heart' of the King of France and his mother in Mary's favour and convince them to undertake the enterprise of England. Mendoza did not receive the response he was hoping for and, in a letter to Mary, he explained to the queen that Henry and his mother 'have done nothing from their part to defend you and oppose your execution.' Henry did not want to take action against England himself; however, he could not afford to let Philip alone invade the British Isles, as that would definitely tilt the balance of power in Europe. Thus, through the cardinal of Ferrara, he had asked the Pope to urge neither Philip nor James VI to carry out the enterprise of England.⁵¹⁰

It was clear that Henry was not going to take action against England. Subsequently in early May, Huntly, Maxwell and Hamilton sent letters to Spain asking for men and money to re-impose the 'true religion' in the realm of Scotland,⁵¹¹ on the advice of and by the means of Guise.⁵¹² Huntly sent a letter to Philip II, on 15 May 1586, from Elgin.⁵¹³ This was the first of the letters in his long and treasonable correspondence with Spain. In it, he asked for Spanish support to liberate Mary and to restore the Catholic faith in Scotland. His letter was followed by other letters from Maxwell,⁵¹⁴ and Hamilton,⁵¹⁵ both dated 20 May. Robert Bruce was the bearer of the letters. The 'advices touching the letters and articles presented to the King [of Spain] by Robert Bruce,' printed by Teulet, did not contain many originalities to convince Philip to take on the enterprise; once again, the 'Spanish origin of the Scottish nation' was asserted in the introduction; then, the 'influence that the conversion of Scotland had in the one of England and Ireland;' moving on to the 'English attacks to the Indies and support

⁵⁰⁹ Henry III to M. d'Esneval. Teulet, *Relations*, iv, pp. 37-40.

⁵¹⁰ BL, Mendoza to Mary Stewart, 4 Apr. 1586, Add. MS 48,027, fo. 333. See app. ii.

⁵¹¹ See Mackie, 'Scotland and the Spanish Armada,' pp. 1-23.

⁵¹² Grant, 'The Brig o'Dee Affair,' in Goodare & Lynch, *The Reign of James VI*, p. 98.

⁵¹³ The earl of Huntly to Philip II, 15 May 1586. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 349-50; curiously, in 1586, the earls of Huntly, of Sutherland and Caithness, and the Lords Fleming, Seton and Maxwell, were reported as pro-French. See BL, 'The present State of Scotland with their particular dispositions,' 1586, Stowe MS 158, fos. 23-7.

⁵¹⁴ The earl of Morton to the King of Spain, 20 May 1586. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 353-4; Brown, 'The Making of a *Politique*,' p. 160.

to Flanders' to enrage him. The necessity of liberation of the imprisoned Queen was of course also included.⁵¹⁶

It was clear that still, apart from restoring the 'true faith' to the Isle, that the expedition to liberate Mary and place her on the English throne was still an illusion.⁵¹⁷

Mary, whilst imprisoned in Chartley, was receiving favours from Philip II. She had received 6,000 crowns through Mendoza to support her necessities and the entertainment of her 'friends' in the country, and on 18 May, she asked Beaton to thank Mendoza. But it was evident that she understood that Philip was undertaking the enterprise because of Leicester's landing in Flanders and Drake's continuous attacks on Spanish interests.⁵¹⁸ She knew that with France occupied as it was with internal affairs and unable to help her, Philip was her only chance.⁵¹⁹

She also ordered Beaton to 'Remerciez tres affectueusement le Roy d'Espagne par son ambassadeur don Bernardino, des douze mil escuz qu'il avoyt, á ma requeste, octroyés á mon filz.'⁵²⁰ However, on 20 May, only two days after her letter to Beaton, she wrote to Charles Paget that:

I have harde that there were lat yeare 12000 crowns appoynted for my sonne, advise the spanish ambassador [Mendoza] to make them be arrested and reserved for the negotiation of this enterprise for that which was before delivered was right evill dispersed and imployed.⁵²¹

Furthermore, she also wrote, on the same day, to the Spanish diplomat, Mendoza himself, claiming that:

considering the obstinacy and perseverance of my son in heresy, and which I assure you I have deplored and lamented day and night more than my own calamity, and, foresing the imminent injury which will result to the Catholic church, if he should succeed to the throne of

⁵¹⁵ Lord Claude Hamilton to Philip II, 20 May 1586. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 351-2.

⁵¹⁶ 'Certains advis touchant les lettres et articles presentez au Roy par Robert de Bruce, escossois.' *ibid.*, v, pp. 354-8.

⁵¹⁷ In a letter dated 18-30 May 1586, the King of France claimed that 'the project instigated by the King of Spain and the Jesuits is done in the interest of Mary Stuart.' Henry III to M. d'Esneval. *ibid.*, iv, pp. 37-40.

⁵¹⁸ Mary Stewart to Beaton 18 May 1586. Labanoff, *Lettres*, vi, pp. 294-302; see also Mary Stewart to Charles Paget, 20 May 1586. *ibid.*, vi, pp. 312-22.

⁵¹⁹ Mary Stewart to Persons, 29 May 1586. *ibid.*, vi, pp. 333-7.

⁵²⁰ 'to thank very affectionately the King of Spain through his ambassador don Bernardino, for the twelve thousand crowns which he had, at in my request, granted to my son.' Mary Stewart to Beaton, 18 May 1586. *ibid.*, vi, p. 302.

⁵²¹ Mary Stewart to Charles Paget, 20 May 1586. *ibid.*, vi, pp. 312-22.; see also Mary Stewart to Beaton, 18 May 1586. *ibid.*, vi, pp. 294-302.

this kingdom, I have come to a determination, in case my said son should not embrace, before my death, the Catholic religion (of which I must confess to you I see little hope so long as he remains in Scotland), to cede and give by will my right to the said succession to his crown to the said sieur king [Philip II].⁵²²

Without delay, the Spanish ambassador forwarded Mary's letter to the Escorial, with a letter of his own, requesting Philip to take action on Mary's behalf.⁵²³ On 18 July, Philip II replied to Mendoza's letter declaring that he had decided to support Mary financially.⁵²⁴

The 12,000 crowns were recovered by Mendoza.⁵²⁵ Mary's change of heart was due to the failure of her correspondent to inform her of the news from within the realm. Mary was having problems receiving letters in her prison in Chartley, two letters for the ambassador of France sent on 10 February and 26 July 1585 were not acknowledged as being received until 28 April 1586, because of the strict guard.⁵²⁶

It seems quite probable that Mary had not heard anything beforehand due to the earl of Shrewbury's close guard, but it was only after the letter to Beaton, that she was informed of James's alliance with Queen of Elizabeth.⁵²⁷ At the beginning of May, Elizabeth had sent Mildmay, a member of her privy council, to Scotland with £4,000 sterling. This money was part of the agreement for the defensive and offensive league between two countries. Supposedly, James had asked Elizabeth for money to levy 4,000 Scotsmen to be sent to Holland and Zeeland. The final signature of the Anglo-Scottish treaty was added on 20 July.⁵²⁸

⁵²² AGS, Mary Stewart to Mendoza, from Chartley, 20 May 1585, K 1564, fo. 72; Hume translated this letter, see *CSP Span.*, iii, pp. 581-2; this same letter can be found in French in Labanoff, *Lettres*, vi, pp. 309-11.

⁵²³ Jensen, *Diplomacy and Dogmatism*, p. 84.

⁵²⁴ See pp. 86-7 of this thesis.

⁵²⁵ Mary Stewart to Persons, 29 May 1586. Labanoff, *Lettres*, vi, pp. 333-7.

⁵²⁶ Mary Stewart to Mendoza, from Chartley, 20 May 1585. The editor made a mistake, it was not 1585 but 1586. Mary, *Letters*, pp. 174-6; this same letter can be found in French in Mary Stewart to Mendoza, 20 May 1586. Labanoff, *Lettres*, vi, pp. 309-11; in another letter from Mary Stewart this time to Holt, dated 3 May 1586, she wrote: 'Good father. Your letter of the 10th of December 1584, and of the 10th of March 1585, came no sooner to my hand then the 15th of the last moneth.' Mary Stewart to Holt, 30 May 1586. *ibid.*, vi, pp. 337-40. The same was claimed in a letter to Persons, 'Good Frende. Your letters of the [?] of _ eyghtye foure and of the [?] h. of februarye eyghtye five came no soner to my handes then the 25th of the last month.' Mary Stewart to Parsons, 29 May 1586. *ibid.*, vi, pp. 333-7.

⁵²⁷ PRO, James VI to Elizabeth I, 10 May 1586, SP 52/39/71; James VI, *Letters*, pp. 68-9.

⁵²⁸ Mendoza, 30 May 1586. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 358-9; for more expert research about this see J. Goodare, 'James VI's English Subsidy,' in Goodare & Lynch, *The Reign of James VI*, pp. 110-26.

Obviously, Mary was disappointed with her son. While he was negotiating his pension with Elizabeth, Mary was still trying to convince Philip to receive her son James in Spain to be instructed and converted to the Catholic religion.⁵²⁹ Mary knew that Philip would only embark on the enterprise if assistance, or at least neutrality, was assured by Scotland; and for that, James's co-operation was necessary.⁵³⁰ But after learning of the Anglo-Scottish treaty in June, she wrote to Mendoza that upon witnessing her son's heresy, she had decided to disinherit him, appointing Philip as heir to her right to the English crown.⁵³¹ Mary's letter was intercepted by English agents, and immediately Elizabeth had a copy sent to James; meanwhile, Philip ransacked the archives of Rome, Paris and Simancas trying to find it.⁵³²

Mendoza, being aware of the bad relations existing between Mary and James because 'of the great ambition of the son,' had tried to make the Queen realise that her only chance for help lay with Philip, remarking that she had little reason to be grateful to the French, because 'they had made impossible all the ways for her liberation.'⁵³³ In fact, Mary knew that there was little chance that Philip would do anything to see her freed of her prison. Nevertheless, she did not make her decision public because it would have meant a complete rupture with her son, and she was unsure that Philip's appointment as her heir would be understood by the Scots.⁵³⁴ On 21 May, in an attempt to gain Philip's favour, Mary sent a dispatch to Charles Paget and Mendoza titled 'por la deliverance du Roy d'Ecosse entre le mains du Roy d'Espagne. & donation de la Courone d'Angleterre au Roy d'Espagne par son testament.'⁵³⁵

Mary, after the difficulties imposed on her net of agents and informers over the previous months, desperately wanted to reinforce her friends' position, and subsequently hers. She had already written to Thomas Morgan, on 19 May,⁵³⁶

⁵²⁹ Mary Stewart to Charles Paget, 20 May 1586. Labanoff, *Lettres*, vi, pp. 312-22.

⁵³⁰ Mary Stewart to Charles Paget, 20 May 1586. *Warrender Papers*, i, p. 215.

⁵³¹ *CSP Span.*, iii, p. 150; see also Elder, *Influences*, p. 128.

⁵³² Martin & Parker, *The Spanish Armada*, p. 103.

⁵³³ Mendoza to Philip II, 26 June 1586. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 359-62.

⁵³⁴ Mary Stewart to Mendoza, from Chartley, 20 May 1585. The editor was mistaken, it was not 1585, but 1586. Mary, *Letters*, pp. 174-6; this same letter can be found in French in Labanoff, *Lettres*, vi, pp. 309-11.

⁵³⁵ BL, 'Extract of the dispatch of the Queen of Scots to Charles Paget and Bernardino de Mendoza,' 21 May 1586, Add. MS 48,027, fos. 327-7b; Mary Stewart to Charles Paget, 21 May 1586. Labanoff, *Lettres*, vi, pp. 312-22.

⁵³⁶ It should be noticed that the letter in which Mary recommended William to Mendoza was sent one

declaring that she had recommended him to Mendoza to try to procure him a pension according to his merits from Philip.⁵³⁷ She also gave 1,000 crowns to Morgan, as partial payment of the 5,000 crowns owed to Charles Paget. Knowing that there was no other remedy, but to call upon Philip and the Pope to solicit the money.⁵³⁸ Thus, on 2 July 1586, Mary wrote to Mendoza to ask Philip to reimburse her the money, which would enable her to maintain her net of agents.⁵³⁹

By this time, the secret negotiations between Mary and Parma, carried out by means of an Englishman named Bodenham, who was one of Parma's servants, and an Italian merchant called Augustin Grafigy, were publicly exposed by the English government. Bodenham and Grafigny were arrested and interrogated by the English Council. They were accused of plotting to help the Spanish to retake their maritime provinces of the States. In fact, Bodenham had gone to England with a letter from Parma to Mary, asking her to make definite proposals.⁵⁴⁰

James, knowing that his mother had planned to deprive him of the Scottish crown and his rights to the English throne,⁵⁴¹ finally signed the Treaty of Alliance between England and Scotland. This agreement was ratified at Berwick by the ambassadors of James and Elizabeth on 5 July 1586. Mary was not only increasingly sceptical and distrustful of Spanish promises of help, but she had been abandoned by her own son, who had finally entered into Elizabeth's sphere of influence.

Mary Queen of Scots's Final Days and the Prelude to the Great Armada, 1586-1587

On 2 July 1586, Mary wrote: 'I am ready to yield and to bow my neck to the yoke,'⁵⁴² but obviously, she wanted to avoid this. Thus, at the end of June, Anthony Babington,

day later, 20 May 1586. Also that the editor mistook the date, it was not 1585 but 1586. Mary, *Letters*, pp. 174-6; this same letter can be found in French in Labanoff, *Lettres*, vi, pp. 309-11.

⁵³⁷ *ibid.*, vi, pp. 330-3.

⁵³⁸ Mary Stewart to Thomas Morgan, 2 July 1586. *ibid.*, vi, pp. 354- 8; Mary Stewart to Beaton, July 1586. *ibid.*, vi, pp. 362- 7

⁵³⁹ Mary Stewart to Mendoza, 2 July 1586. *ibid.*, vi, pp. 352-3; Mary Stewart to Charles Paget, 2 July 1586. *ibid.*, vi, pp. 358-60.

⁵⁴⁰ Elizabeth, *Letters*, pp. 176-8.

⁵⁴¹ Parker, *The Grand Strategy*, p. 191.

⁵⁴² Mary Stewart to Mendoza, 2 July 1586. Mary, *Letters*, pp. 176-7.

a devout Catholic, had smuggled a message to Mary informing her that six gentlemen were about to assassinate Elizabeth, while others would haste to release Mary from her captivity.⁵⁴³ Mary welcomed the plot, and replied to Babington's letter on 17 July, giving her enthusiastic approval to the planned murder,⁵⁴⁴ but she made clear that Mendoza needed to be informed of the project.⁵⁴⁵

On the same day, Mary ordered Lord Paget to go with her ordinary agent, Sir Frances Englefield, to Spain;⁵⁴⁶ Doctor Lewis to go to Rome; Liggons to the Low Countries; and Lord Claude Hamilton to Scotland. All of them carried a dispatch containing, point-by-point, her advice on the enterprise.⁵⁴⁷ Lord Paget's letter was marked with a T, Englefield's with an E; Beaton's letter was marked with the letter L; a letter to be delivered to Mendoza to with an F; finally, a short letter informing the essential points to William Fulgeam with an H.⁵⁴⁸

In Lord Paget's instructions to go to Spain, she advised him to try to make Philip and the Pope understand that if they intended to carry out the enterprise, the occasion now offered a great advantage, as the Catholics were very disposed to it. Nevertheless, they would have to grant the required support of horsemen, footmen, armour, munitions and money. She had already written to her Catholic friends, promising that until they had sufficient assurance from the Pope and Philip, accomplishing what was required of them, nothing should be instigated by them. Mary understood that it would be very difficult for Philip to obtain the forces to carry out an invasion of the British Isles before the recovery of the isles of Cuba and Santo Domingo, and the

⁵⁴³ All the original letters and papers relating to the Babington plot can be found in BL, 'Original letters and papers, chiefly relating to Mary, Queen of Scots, in connection with the Babington conspiracy,' 1572-1588, Eg. MS 2,124; BL, 'Correspondence of Mary Queen of Scots,' Add. MS 48,027, fos. 330-1b, 340b-1; see also J.H. Pollen (ed.), *Mary Queen of Scots and the Babington Plot* (SHS, 1922).

⁵⁴⁴ BL, Mary Stewart to Anthony Babington, Add. MS 48,027, fo. 330.

⁵⁴⁵ Mary Stewart to Anthony Babington, 17 July 1586. Labanoff, *Lettres*, vi, pp. 383-95; about Mendoza's involvement in the Babington affair see also 'Monsieur de Chateneuf sur la conspiration de Babington.' *ibid.*, vi, pp. 274-93.

⁵⁴⁶ Five days later, 23 July 1586, Robert Bruce left Scotland to see the King of Spain, but not by command of Mary, but following orders of the Scottish Catholic nobility and the duke of Guise. Philip II to Mendoza, 28 Sept. 1586. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 402-4.

⁵⁴⁷ BL, Mary Stewart to Charles Paget, 17 July 1586, Cott. MS Calig. Cix, fo. 278; Labanoff, *Lettres*, vi, pp. 399-404.

⁵⁴⁸ Mary Stewart to Thomas Morgan, 17 July 1586. Labanoff, *Lettres*, vi, pp. 420- 6.

arrival of the fleet from the Indies. Nevertheless, she still maintained in her letters that the best time to carry out the enterprise was before the summer.⁵⁴⁹

Mary's instructions for Englefield and Paget, dated the same day, were firstly to present themselves to Philip II in person to inform him that:

I cannot offer no more then a confirmation of the entreid good will that I have to serve in all I may for the weale of his affayres and theruppon to make cowrse of mine depend forever withowt respect in that behalfe of any other prince of Christendome.

Mary assured him in her letter, that she was already labouring with her friends in Scotland, but that she could not give Philip assurance that James would give her satisfaction, even though he had recently written to her promising 'that he may of his entier affection and obedience towards me.'

Also, she had to thank the Spanish minister Granvelle and Secretary Idiaquez, and to assure them that the money they sent through Beaton would be used to accomplish her escape. She had already expressed her desire to Beaton and Persons – who at the time was collaborating with Parma – to dispatch all her intelligence to one among them, to someone 'sufficientlye instructed towards the sayd don Bernardino, to impart unto him particularly, the platt of the sayd enterprise.' His main purpose would be to try to learn from Mendoza when and how the enterprise meant to make the forces advance.⁵⁵⁰

However, Beaton's instructions, although dated the same day, were quite different. Firstly, he had to thank Mendoza and, subsequently, Philip for having assigned to Mary the 12,000 crowns, which were previously allocated for James.⁵⁵¹ Moreover, what she primarily needed was the 4,000 crowns that she had promised Paget. Nevertheless, his most important task was:

⁵⁴⁹ BL, Mary Stewart to Charles Paget, 17 July 1586, Add. MS 48,027, fos. 326-6b; Labanoff, *Lettres*, vi, pp. 399-404.

⁵⁵⁰ BL, Mary Stewart to Sir Francis Englefield, Add. MS 48,027 fos. 325b-6; Labanoff, *Lettres*, vi, pp. 404-12.

⁵⁵¹ See p. 98.

Si mon filz déspeche par delá Chelshome, comme vous avez esté adverti, avec aulcum solide message pour se remettre bien avec moy, démontrez y toute favorable correspondance, en attendant que vous puissiez avoir ma response.⁵⁵²

It was clear that James had set his hopes on receiving higher favours from Elizabeth; thus, the Anglo-Scottish Treaty was in its final stages.

Philip did not have to wait for Paget and Englefield's arrival to be informed about Mary's plans. In a letter to Mendoza from the Escorial, on 18 July, warmly welcoming Mary's plans, he asked Mendoza to keep the necessary secret and provide her with the 4,000 crowns that she had asked for. The money was going to be sent to Mendoza in the next post for the embassy in Paris, for her until she received the 12,000 crowns that had been assigned to her,⁵⁵³ which were eventually supplied to Mary on 27 July.⁵⁵⁴

However, these were not her only requests. On 23 July, Mendoza sent Philip a summary of Beaton's commission. However, in this dispatch, Beaton's petitions, in the name of Mary Stewart, were very different from what we have just seen. The requests were for 6,000 soldiers and 150,000 crowns. In exchange, no levies should ever be made in Scotland against Philip and two ports in Scotland near the English border were to be turned over to Spain.⁵⁵⁵ In Mendoza's letter to Philip, it was indicated that he was suspicious of Beaton had told him that Guise had promised the Scottish nobles that the 150,000 crowns was ready, which annoyed Philip.⁵⁵⁶

On 27 July, Mary wrote to Englefield stating:

I praye you to give right affectionate thanks therefore in my name to the Kinge of Spaine. Letting him know how much I think my selfe obliged unto him, and that thereof I can offer no more than a confirmation of the entire good will I have to serve in all I maye for the weale of

⁵⁵² 'If my son sends [Father John] Chisholm there, as you have been informed, with any substantial message to restore him to my favour, show him all goodwill, and wait until you may have any response.' BL, Mary Stewart to Beaton, 17 July 1586, Add. MS 48,027, fo. 325; Labanoff, *Lettres*, vi, pp. 413-9.

⁵⁵³ Philip II to Mendoza, 18 July 1586. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 365-6.

⁵⁵⁴ BL, Mary Stewart to Mendoza, 27 July 1586, Add. MS 48,027 fo. 324b; Mary, *Letters*, pp. 177-81.

⁵⁵⁵ AGS, the duke of Guise to Mendoza, 16 July, K 1586, fo. 105; J. Croze, *Les Guises, les Valois et Philip II*, i (Paris, 1866), p. 375.

⁵⁵⁶ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 23 July 1586, K 1564, fo. 114; Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 367-9.

his affaires and there to make the cause of myne despende forever with an respecte of any other Prince in Christendome your may also thank Granvell, and Secretary Idiaquez.⁵⁵⁷

In the same vain she wrote to Paget,⁵⁵⁸ Beaton and Persons.⁵⁵⁹ All these correspondences were being closely monitored by the English. At this time, Sir Hatton declared that ‘the four heads of all these mischief are the Queen of Scots, the Pope, Philip II, and the Papist at home.’⁵⁶⁰ Thus, in April 1586, Guifford and Maude – two secret agents of Walsingham – obtained the confidence of Morgan and Ballard, who later introduced them to Mendoza, and afterwards to Babington and Savadge. They had been able to obtain and pass on all the secret correspondences to Walsingham, who waited until the moment when he was convinced that he had sufficient proof to compromise Mary. Then, on 4 August, two days after Mary had written the above letter, he ordered Ballard to be apprehended. She was charged with complicity in the Babington plot against Elizabeth; and on the 8 of the same month, Sir Amias Paulet unexpectedly removed Mary from Chartley to Tixall and took possession of all her papers and jewels.⁵⁶¹

Mary’s actions were closely followed by her keepers, but, on 27 September, Mendoza was able to give 8,000 crowns to Beaton for Mary.⁵⁶² It was not until the very end of September when Mary was able to send a letter to her correspondents on the continent. The letter was directed to Guise, in which she regretted the failure of the plot and, above all, she expressed her sorrow for the situation of the Catholics in Scotland.⁵⁶³

Lord Claude Hamilton, and the earls of Huntly and Morton had sent Robert Bruce to visit Philip II. Bruce left Scotland on 23 July,⁵⁶⁴ arriving at the Escorial in the last

⁵⁵⁷ BL, Mary Stewart to Father Englefield, 27 July 1586, Add. MS 48,027, fos. 535-6b.

⁵⁵⁸ BL, Mary Stewart to Charles Paget, 27 July 1586, Add. MS 48,027, fos. 537-8.

⁵⁵⁹ BL, Mary Stewart to Father Englefield, 27 July 1586, Add. MS 48,027, fos. 535-6b.

⁵⁶⁰ BL, ‘Scheme showing the foure principall heades and workers of all these myschefe,’ 1586, Eg. MS 2,124, fo. 17.

⁵⁶¹ See BL, Sir. C. Hatton, ‘Summary of charges and proofs against Mary,’ 1586, MSS Eg. 2,124, fo. 29; BL, ‘Principal points of Babington’s conspiracy,’ 1586, Eg. MS 2,124, fo. 43; BL, ‘Arguments for the justice and necessity of war [with Spain?],’ Eg. MS 2,124, fo. 45.

⁵⁶² Don Bernadino de Mendoza to Philip II, 27 Sept. 1586. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 397-402.

⁵⁶³ Mary Stewart to the duke of Guise, Sept. 1586. Labanoff, *Lettres*, vi, pp. 438-40.

⁵⁶⁴ De Lamar, *Diplomacy and Dogmatism*, p. 81; however, on 13 of August, Walsingham wrote: ‘There are lately arrived in that realme one Hays [Father Edmund Hay], generall of the Jesuistes of the Scot[tish] nation, and one Durye [?] that hath written ageynst the ministers of Scotelande, being conducted thither by on Rob[ert] Bruce sometyme secretarie to the B[ishop] of Glasco[w].’ *Hamilton*

week of September 1586 to meet with Philip. He carried letters from Guise and requests from the principal Catholics of the kingdom, Lord Claude Hamilton, and the earls of Huntly and Morton, asking for soldiers and money.⁵⁶⁵

Bruce was not able to get much from Philip apart from welcoming words and a letter for Guise.⁵⁶⁶ Philip was waiting for Parma's reports about the affairs of Flanders, to be able to take a final decision. Philip's letter to Guise, dated 28 September, was also nothing other than welcoming to the good intentions of Hamilton, Huntly and Morton, to whom he had decided not to write back, to prevent their actions from being discovered. However, he declared that they had gained great credit with him.⁵⁶⁷ On the same day, Philip communicated his views to Parma, recommending extreme caution and advising him to remain in close contact with Mendoza and Guise.⁵⁶⁸

On the same day, Philip very cleverly ordered Mendoza to let Parma know of the good disposition of the Scots for an attack on England, even if Philip would only give them the 4,000 men that they had asked for. Thus, if there was a revolution in the English-Scottish borders, the English would have fewer troops to send to Flanders.⁵⁶⁹

Mendoza did not write to Parma until 15 October 1586. In his letter, Mendoza revealed the advantages of supporting a rebellion in Scotland. If Spain provided the Scots with the requested payment – to support 6,000 soldiers to resist an invasion by the English Queen – this would be used as a distraction so that Elizabeth I would not be able to send forces to Flanders. For him it was a serious business, because 'seeing fire in the neighbour kingdom, where from to cross there is more impediment than a small river, which can be forded by most of its parts.' In addition, because religion was the main claim for many Catholics in England who would join the rebellion.⁵⁷⁰

Papers, ii, p. 673; moreover, Walsyngham claimed on 26 August 1585 that Bruce was in Scotland dealing with the earl of Gray. *ibid.*, ii, p. 685.

⁵⁶⁵ *CSP Span.*, iii., pp. 286-9; Elder, *Influences*, p. 132.

⁵⁶⁶ Philip II to Mendoza, 28 Sept. 1586. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 402-4.

⁵⁶⁷ AGS, Philip II to the duke of Guise, from the Escorial, 28 Sept. 1586, K 1448. fo. 73; Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 404-5.

⁵⁶⁸ Philip II, *Correspondence*, iii, pp. 152-3.

⁵⁶⁹ AGS, Philip II to Mendoza, 28 Sept. 1586, K 1448, fo. 74; Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 402-4.

⁵⁷⁰ AGS, Mendoza to the duke of Parma, 15 Oct. 1586, K 1564, fo. 191; Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 405-12.

Mendoza had not doubt that Scotland and Ireland were the most secure routes for an invasion.⁵⁷¹ However, he had many doubts about the plan and requested Parma's opinion on several issues. Mendoza was unsure whether the 6,000 men should be natives of the kingdom or foreigners; which was the best port to disembark at; or who was the most suitable person to lead the troops. He also did not know if James VI was going to join the Catholic nobles in the rebellion, or fight against them; and wanting to send payments to Scotsmen for their collaboration in the matter, what would be the best way for the money to be sent and to where. Finally, in his letter, Mendoza asked Parma to reply as soon as possible, because he did not want a new delay to arouse doubts and mistrust in the minds of Parma and the Scots.⁵⁷²

Mendoza was being continuously harassed by the Jesuit missionaries working in Scotland.⁵⁷³ The General of the Jesuits had talked with the Pope about the work that the missionaries of his order were doing in this realm, and how their work could be improved, if he would help them buy ornaments and print books.⁵⁷⁴ However, not receiving a clear reply, they had focused their actions on convincing the Spanish ambassador, and subsequently Philip, of the imminent operation.

A month later, Parma replied to Mendoza's letter. He believed that action should be taken in Scotland, but he asked Mendoza to try to delay any such action for the moment. Parma was in the middle of some very important negotiations with Elizabeth, and he did not want to upset her.

In the meantime, keep the Scots in hand with good words and in the discussion of the question you have pointed out as desirable to have answer. They should be dealt with, as you say, in a way which will not alienate them or give them any cause for complaint. You understand these matters well and will be able, with your usual dexterity, to keep them friendly.⁵⁷⁵

Meanwhile, in England, Mary was being judged for her involvement in the Babington plot.⁵⁷⁶ Finally on 25 October, her judges reconvened at Westminster to declare her

⁵⁷¹ *CSP Span.*, iii, pp. 636-7.

⁵⁷² Mendoza to the duke of Parma, 15 Oct. 1586. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 405-12.

⁵⁷³ Mendoza to Philip II, 20 Oct. 1586. *ibid.*, v, pp. 413-6.

⁵⁷⁴ Mendoza to Philip II, 20 Oct. 1586. *ibid.*, v, pp. 416-8.

⁵⁷⁵ AGS, the duke of Parma to Mendoza, from Brussels, 27 Nov. 1586, K 1563, fo. 232; also more extensively quoted by De Lamar, *Diplomacy and Dogmatism*, p. 82.

⁵⁷⁶ Relating to the trial see BL, 'Original letters and papers, chiefly relating to Mary, Queen of Scots,'

guilty of seeking Elizabeth's death. Mary knew that her last chance to avoid a certain death in English hands lay with Philip. Even Beaton had written to Mary saying that she should not wait for assistance from France, due to the internal tensions of the country. Thus, Mary sent a letter to Mendoza thanking him for all the things he had done for her, and asking him to inform Philip that:

quando su hijo no se convirtiese a la religion catholica, ella declararia, como declarava a V[uestra] M[ajestad] por legitimo heredero de las tres coronas de Inglaterra, Irlanda y Escocia, en quien renunciava todos quantos derechos ella podia tener y tenia a ellas.⁵⁷⁷

However, Mendoza knew that Mary would do better service dead than alive. He wrote to Philip, on 8 November, pointing out that if Philip was declared legitimate heir, with Mary's absence and her son not being Catholic, Philip would be able to conquer the divided realm. Nevertheless, they had to wait for the feedback from Parma on the plans, before taking any action, and then discuss this with Guise.⁵⁷⁸ All the while Mary's time was drawing to an end.

On 23 November, just a week after being condemned to receive 'the stroke of death' and already in her final prison at Fotheringhay, Mary decided to write to her correspondents on the continent a final *adieu*. The first of the letters was directed to Mendoza. Mary seemed graciously resigned to her imminent death, and her only request for the Spanish ambassador was for him to pray to God for her and 'let the churches in Spain remember me in their prayers.'⁵⁷⁹

But her letter to Sixtus V was of a very political nature. She declared solemnly that if her son persisted in being Protestant, she would transmit to Philip her rights to the Crown of England. However, she expressed her desire that if James returned to the Catholic faith, he was to be directed by the advice of Philip and Guise.⁵⁸⁰

1586, Eg. MS 2,124, fo. 11.

⁵⁷⁷ 'if her [Mary Queen of Scots'] son [James VI] would not convert to the Catholic religion, she would declare, as she declared Your Majesty [Philip II] as legitimate heir of the three crowns of England, Ireland and Scotland, in whom she renounced all the rights that you could have and have to them.' Mendoza to Philip II, 8 Nov. 1586. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 418-23.

⁵⁷⁸ Mendoza to Philip II, 8 Nov. 1586. *ibid.*, v, pp. 423-6.

⁵⁷⁹ Mary Stewart to Mendoza, 23 Nov. 1586. Labanoff, *Lettres*, vi, pp. 456-61.

⁵⁸⁰ Mary Stewart to the Pope, 23 Nov. 1586. *ibid.*, vi, pp. 447-55.

The following day, Mary wrote to her loyal friend, Beaton. Mary seemed to have become more aware that her last days were drawing closer. In her letter she asked her ambassador to write to the Pope, Philip II, the duke of Lorraine, all the other Christian princes and her relatives and friends, to ask them to return her money and possessions and distribute them to her servants.⁵⁸¹

On 28 November, Mendoza informed Philip that Robert Bruce had letters from Claude Hamilton and the earls of Huntly and Morton, in which they claimed that Elizabeth had tempted them with pensions. However, having refused such offers, Elizabeth was dealing with the other nobles in Scotland in order to expel them from the country. As a result, they saw themselves forced to take arms before Philip had made a decision about the enterprise. Obviously, they were trying to make Philip hasten his decision, to which Mendoza, in his normal tone, replied in support of their good intentions, but advised them not to take to arms before the timing was right. Robert Bruce also informed Mendoza that three other nobles had been converted to Catholicism by the Jesuit missionaries, who had also brought another 20,000 Scottish souls to the faith. This was a highly unrealistic and over-optimistic estimate, which was calculated to win Philip's support, playing on the King's stated desire to see the re-Catholisation of Scotland.⁵⁸²

Philip ordered Parma to have his troops ready for the summer of 1587,⁵⁸³ and Mendoza to send Bruce to see Guise with a letter from Philip himself and to inform Guise of what Bruce had told to the Spanish ambassador. Mendoza also wrote to Parma informing him of the news carried by Bruce.⁵⁸⁴ Parma had been kept up to date on the affairs of Scotland by Captain James Stewart, the former earl of Arran, who had recently visited him.⁵⁸⁵ Parma was in favour of a military action and wrote to Juan de Idiaquez that the 6,000 men requested by the Scots had to be foreigners, preferably Italians, and that the leader and the port of embarkation had to be chosen by Philip; but he gravely advised that the 150,000 crowns that had been asked for should go with

⁵⁸¹ Mary Stewart to Beaton, 24 Nov. 1586. *ibid.*, vi, pp. 465-72.

⁵⁸² Mendoza to Philip II, 28 Nov. 1586. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 432-3.

⁵⁸³ Williams, *Philip II*, p. 189.

⁵⁸⁴ Mendoza to Philip II, 24 Dec. 1586. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 439-52.

⁵⁸⁵ *CSP Scot.*, ix, p. 195.

the troops. Meanwhile, the Scots should take to arms to liberate James from the English faction and their ministers.⁵⁸⁶

The English knew of the plan, as can be seen in a report titled ‘The Castilian project against England with advertisements for preventinge, thereof with a viewe of greate Brittain. A comparison betweene Brittain and Spaine, with direcons for a councill of warre for the raisinge of 2500 foote and 5000 horse,’ kept in the National Library of Scotland. Even the reasons for Philip II undertaking the enterprise were clear: firstly to cease Drake’s attacks to Spanish interests; and secondly to stop Elizabeth from sending aid to the wars in the Netherlands.⁵⁸⁷

The Spanish were also following the events on the Isle very closely, especially Mary’s trial.⁵⁸⁸ Thus, Mendoza informed Philip, on 7 December, that William Keith – James VI’s ambassador – in the company of the French ambassador, had already arrived in London with orders to do anything to preserve Mary’s life.⁵⁸⁹ However, with the approach of the final decision on life or death for Mary, James had sent a letter to Elizabeth on behalf of his mother.⁵⁹⁰ Moreover, he dispatched the master of Gray and Sir Robert Melville as his special envoys for his last appeal for his mother’s life.⁵⁹¹ James seemed to have opposed Mary’s execution supporting the idea of royal immunity.⁵⁹² However, Gray was in favour of Mary’s death penalty, having recommended Elizabeth to execute the Queen of Scots.⁵⁹³

James’s gesture raised new hopes in the Scottish Catholics, who decided to send a commission with Colonel Stewart – captain of the guard of James VI – to be presented to Mendoza in a secret interview. During this meeting, Stewart claimed that Lord Claude Hamilton and the earls of Huntly and Crawford, upon seeing the

⁵⁸⁶ Mendoza to Philip II, 24 Dec. 1586. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 439-52.

⁵⁸⁷ NLS, ‘The Castilian project against England with advertisements for preventinge, thereof with a viewe of greate Brittain. A comparison betweene Brittain and Spaine, with direcons for a councill of warre for the raisinge of 2500 foote and 5000 horse,’ ADV MS 33.3.3.

⁵⁸⁸ See for example Mendoza to Philip II, 24 Dec. 1586. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 437-9.

⁵⁸⁹ Mendoza to Philip II, 7 Dec. 1586. *ibid.*, v, pp. 434-6.

⁵⁹⁰ BL, ‘Letter to Queen Elizabeth by James VI, King of Scotland, on behalf of his mother,’ 1587, Stowe MS 145, fo. 179.

⁵⁹¹ James VI, *Letters*, p. 74.

⁵⁹² BL, James VI to Robert Dudley, earl of Leicester, 4 Dec. 1586, Add. MS 32,092, fo. 56; James VI, *Letters*, pp. 76-7.

⁵⁹³ *ibid.*, p. 79.

oppression that their country was suffering, desired not only to liberate James's conscience, but the whole kingdom. Of course, for that they needed, as they had requested, monetary assistance from Philip II, and they asked that the mediator should be Guise.⁵⁹⁴ Mendoza replied to Colonel Stewart that he found such an offer inconvenient, however, not wanting him to despair, gave him a letter of recommendation to go to represent his commission to Parma.⁵⁹⁵

Once in Flanders, Stewart met with Robert Bruce, who seemed to have gone to see Parma after his visit to Guise. Together, they sent a letter to Mendoza on 20 December, commenting that they had been informed by Catholic nobles in Scotland that James VI desired to send an ambassador to England to finally ascertain whether he was going to be declared heir to the crown of England, because 'if not, he would look for friends.' They affirmed that James not only favoured the Catholics secretly, but also openly, letting them talk about religion publicly. Moreover, they declared that:

que queria salir de su reyno a buscar muger, como lo avia hecho su aguelo...Actiones que muestran tener disignios secretos y descontento de su estado presente...el aver dado consentimiento de secreto a los Señores catholicos para ponelle por qualquier medio, en livertad.⁵⁹⁶

However, Mendoza had no doubts that the enterprise had to begin in Scotland, because once the troops were there, Elizabeth would have to send her forces to the frontier, where she would have more troubles because 'the earls of Westmorland, Northumberland and Cumberland, in whose lands nearly everybody was Catholic, had always offered themselves to take arms for the Catholic religion.' This would make Elizabeth unable to send more aid to the rebels in the Netherlands. He commented to Philip that it would be very difficult to disembark so many troops in Scotland. The ships could moor in the port of Kirkcudbright, as offered by the earl of Morton, but he was quite unsure whether it was large enough.⁵⁹⁷ It should be noted, that when the news of the Spanish preparations reached England, Sir Thomas Tresham, Lord Vaux,

⁵⁹⁴ Mendoza to Philip II, 24 Dec. 1586. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 439-52.

⁵⁹⁵ *ibid.*, v, pp. 445-52.

⁵⁹⁶ 'that he [James VI] wanted to go out of his kingdom to find wife, as his grandfather had done...actions that show that he has secret designs and he is dissatisfied of his present state...and has given consent secretly to the Catholic lords to put him by all means in liberty.' Mendoza to Philip II, 24 Dec. 1586. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 439-52.

⁵⁹⁷ *ibid.*, v, pp. 439-52.

and all other leading recusant noblemen of England had been committed to custody in an attempt to destroy any illusion which the Spanish might hold of internal help at the time of the invasion.⁵⁹⁸ Thus, Mendoza attached to his dispatch a memoir of the Scottish nobility that can be summarised as follows:

Friendly nobles	Enemy nobles	Indifferent nobles
Duke of Lennox	Lord Hamilton	Earl of Argyll
Claude Hamilton	Earl of Angus	Earl of Bothwell
Earl of March	Earl of Mar	Earl of Athol
Earl of Huntly	Lord Lindsay	Laird of Buchannan
Earl of Orkney	Lord Boyd	Earl Marischal
Earl of Morton	The tutor of the Earl of Cassillis	Earl of Cassillis
Earl of Arran		Earl of Eglinton
Earl of Crawford		Earl of Menteith
Earl of Rothes		Lord Saltoun
Earl of Montrose		Lord Forbes
Earl of Moray		Lord Gray
Earl of Caithness		Lord Methven
Earl of Sutherland		Lord Drummond
Earl of Glencairn		Lord Elphinstone
Lord Ogilvy		Lord Sinclair
Lord Fleming		Lord Somerville
Lord Livingston		Lord Sempill
Lord Seton		Lord Ross
Lord Hume		Lord Cathcart
Lord Herries		Lord Sanquhar & Yester
Lord Lovat		Lord Borthwick
Lord Innermeath		Lord Torphichen
Lord Ochiltree		Master of Glamis

Obviously, Bruce and Stewart had compiled this list. As it can be seen, the number of ‘friendly nobles’ was nearly four times larger than enemies. Of the enemies, the four main heads were James Hamilton, 3rd earl of Arran; William Douglas, 9th earl of Angus; Lord John Erskine, 1st earl of Mar and the regent; and Thomas, 6th Lord Boyd.⁵⁹⁹ Mendoza described them as follows:

El Hamilton es el mas principal de Escocia, pero un tonto y que el seguido que tiene por su nombre y calidad se le llevara el conde Claudio Hamilton, a quien yo conosco, y es hombre de entendimiento y valor y a quien tienen por soldado en su milicia. – El de Angus es hombre de oppinion y mucho seguido, cabeza de la faccion Inglesa. El de Mar no tiene ninguno, por ser mal quisto, y Boyd no tiene seguido, pero es hombre fino y de entendimieto que con el gobierna a los demas.⁶⁰⁰

⁵⁹⁸ W.R. Trimble, *The Catholic Laity in Elizabethan England, 1558-1603* (Cambridge, 1964), pp. 136-7.

⁵⁹⁹ For Thomas, 6th Lord Boyd’s travels to Flanders and Spain see *Scots Peerage*, v, pp. 163-5.

⁶⁰⁰ ‘Hamilton [James Hamilton, 3rd earl of Arran] is the most principal of Scotland, but an idiot [by this time his insanity was obvious, and known] and that his retinue, having it because of his name and quality, would be taken by the Lord Claude Hamilton, whom I know, and is man of understanding and valour, and whom they have for a soldier in his militia. – Angus [William Douglas, 9th earl of Angus] is a man of opinions and much retinue, head of the English faction. Mar [John Erskine, 2nd earl of Mar]

Bruce and Stewart had assured Mendoza that, with the assassination of these four, the nobility would be with Spain, because the majority of those who declared themselves as indifferent were very young. Mendoza finished his dispatch by concluding that the Scottish soldiers were usually paid two and a quarter crowns per month, that the salary of the captains and officials was in proportion; moreover, the light cavalry would require eight crowns.⁶⁰¹

However, this plan did not seem to include Guise, and the group of English and Scottish priests, consisting of Doctor Owen Lewis – the bishop of Cassano – and Beaton, as well as some Scottish Catholics in Rome who were trying to convince the Pope that England should be converted to Catholicism with James VI on the throne, and not by Spanish nomination, as it would break the equilibrium of powers in Europe. Philip II, despite still having the support of other members of the Church like Persons and Allen,⁶⁰² desired to suppress this group, and the count of Olivares was charged with this mission.⁶⁰³

On 17 January 1587, the count of Olivares wrote to the King informing that Beaton, Charles Paget and the other members of the group had asked the Pope to send the bishop of Dunblane and Crichton, with a papal brief, to James VI asking him to submit himself to the Catholic religion.⁶⁰⁴ They would carry news of the disposition of the King. However, they believed that the Pope would accept because the bishop had promised to pay his own expenses. Olivares had claimed that this task was not suitable for the Scottish bishop, but he believed that the Jesuit Father Edmund Hay

has none [retinue], considering it in bad taste, and Boyd [Thomas, 6th Lord Boyd] had no retinue, but is a fine man and of understanding with which he governs the others.'

⁶⁰¹ Memoir of the Scottish nobility, annexation to the dispatch of 24 Dec. 1586. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 453-4; *CSP Span.*, iii, p. 688.

⁶⁰² The count-duke of Olivares had informed Philip II, on 19 November 1586, that 'they [Persons and Allen] say that the succession rightly belongs to your Majesty, yourself by reason of the heresy of the King of Scotland.' *CSP Scot.*, iii, p. 660.

⁶⁰³ Hume, 'Introduction' in *CSP Span.*, iv, p. xii.

⁶⁰⁴ NLS, 'Historie of Scotland, since the death of King James the first until the death of King James the sixth,' 1587, ADV MS 35.5.3; moreover, in January 1566, the bishop of Dunblane had already acted as Mary Queen of Scots' envoy to the Pope. See his commission dated 30 January 1566 in Nau, *The History of Mary Stuart*, app. v, pp. 190-3; McCoog, 'Pray to the Lord of the Harvest: Jesuit mission to Scotland in the sixteenth century,' *IR*, liii (2002), p. 145.

was a much better candidate for that mission. In addition, Olivares also proposed that Person could write a proposal for Hay's commission.⁶⁰⁵

But Philip II was getting impatient, as was evident in a letter he wrote to Mendoza.⁶⁰⁶ At the beginning of February 1587, Philip ordered Olivares to convince Sixtus V to declare him heir to the English throne, invalidating James's rights because of his heresy. Olivares had to convince the Pope that Philip hoped to take the Isle not for increasing his own dominions, but for his daughter, the *Infanta* Isabel Clara Eugenia.⁶⁰⁷ Nevertheless, Olivares had been unambiguous when informing his King about the Pope's disposition, remarking 'lo poco que el Papa entiende en cosas de Estado.'⁶⁰⁸

The danger with this was that there was still some hope of James VI's conversion. At the beginning of February 1587, Mendoza seemed very concerned because he was informed that James was considering a plan, which consisted of planting several barrels of gunpowder underneath Elizabeth's chamber. This plot could have seriously damaged the Spanish interests, however, it turned out to be nothing more than a mere rumour.⁶⁰⁹

Persons and Allen were to go to see the Pope in support of the Spanish cause, but beforehand they met with Olivares.⁶¹⁰ The ambassador had orders to entertain them with welcoming words and to use them as intermediaries with the Pope.⁶¹¹ Thus, Olivares suggested to them that they should work on the compilation of a royal genealogical tree, with the help of an expert genealogist, called Robert Heighington. They wrote the following memorial on the succession to the crown of England, on 8 February 1587.

⁶⁰⁵ *CSP Span.*, iv, p. 4.

⁶⁰⁶ BL, Philip II to Mendoza, 28 Jan. 1587, Add. MS 860, fos. 555-6.

⁶⁰⁷ *CSP Span.*, iv, p. 16; Parker, *The Grand Strategy*, p. 191; surprisingly in a contemporary report it was claimed that 'the Catholic King is anxious for peace.' Report on 'James VI of Scotland's affairs, from the departure of Monsieur de Bellievre,' 25 Feb. 1587. Mary, *Letters*, p. 273.

⁶⁰⁸ 'How little the Pope knows on state matters.' AGS, the count-duke of Olivares to Philip II, 9 Feb. 1587, E Rome, Leg. 948.

⁶⁰⁹ Mendoza to Philip II, 7 Feb. 1587. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 463-7.

⁶¹⁰ Mattingly, *The Defeat of the Spanish Armada*, pp. 73-4.

⁶¹¹ Tauton, *History of the Jesuits*, p. 115; Eguiluz, *Persons*, p. 143.

Father Parsons found in France or Spain an Englishman called Mr Robert Heighnison (Heighinton or Higheton) who had been in rebellion with the northern earls and was fled for that cause. This gentleman was very skilful in the Histories of England, and had (as it is said) compiled a chronicle, out of which and by dayly conference Father Parsons drew the pedigree of all the competitors to the crown of England.⁶¹²

Persons went to discuss the matter with the papal Curia. They had discounted Mary since her rescue from the prison was impossible. Her guard in prison had increased along with the security surrounding her. Even in the case of a surprise attack, Mary could be executed even before the Spanish ships docked at an English or Scottish port and, possibly even before they had departed from Spain.⁶¹³

Immediately, Persons and Allen had a meeting with Olivares, during which the Jesuit fathers had asked him how they should behave in case Mary was executed and how they should reply to her letters until that day. Olivares's advice was, firstly, that in case someone asked them about the enterprise to reply avoiding the matter, and focus on the task they were carrying out: to convert the Isle, and care for nothing else, apart from praying to God. Secondly, once Mary died, to tell those Catholics who contacted them, that they should put their hopes in Philip II, the only one who could carry Catholicism back to the British Isles. Olivares also reported that Persons and Allen wanted to start rumours about the enterprise in Scotland, so Elizabeth would try to make an offer to the Scottish Catholic nobles to ensure that they would not join the Spaniards. They claimed that Claude Hamilton, the earl of Huntly and Morton had told them that they were still ready to cooperate and to place James safely in Philip's hands in Spain, of course, in exchange for an amount of money.⁶¹⁴ Nevertheless, it was clear that by this time that Allen and Persons had decided to obey Philip.⁶¹⁵ Philip was also being pressed by Parma⁶¹⁶ and the Pope, to start the enterprise; but prudently trying to avoid any precipitate decision or action and trying to find the right moment

⁶¹² Knox, *Letters and Memorials of Cardinal Allen*, ii, p. 282n; Allen and Persons were also working in a short book in English on defence of the rendering of Deventer by Sir William Stanley to the duke of Parma. Federico Eguiluz claimed that despite the apparent question of whether he was doing right in giving to the Spanish a Dutch city whose defence had been trusted to him, the book, directed not only to the English Catholics that were serving in the Netherlands, but to all the Catholics who secretly professed in England, aimed to convince them to join the Spanish in the enterprise. Eguiluz, *Persons*, p. 142.

⁶¹³ Eguiluz, *Persons*, p. 143.

⁶¹⁴ *CSP Span.*, iv, pp. 53-4; Knox, *Letters and Memorials of Cardinal Allen*, ii, p. 268.

⁶¹⁵ *CSP Dom.*, ii, p. 407.

⁶¹⁶ AGS, the duke of Parma to Philip II, 22 Mar. 1587, E Leg. 592, fo. 49.

when all the conditions were favourable, so he asked Olivares to try to placate their restlessness.⁶¹⁷

As reward, Persons received the appointment of rector of the English College, replacing Holt, who on 18 February had received orders from Allen to prepare himself to embark for England with the Armada in the company of Father Creswell.⁶¹⁸ In addition, Scottish missionaries who had been paid with Spanish money were sent to Scotland to gain sympathy within the realm for the Spanish enterprise.⁶¹⁹

Not all the Jesuits, however, agreed with these ideas. Charles Paget and Thomas Morgan, loyal friends of Mary, suspected that Philip II had no interest in liberating Mary from her prison and they started to criticise Persons's actions.⁶²⁰ Parish claimed that Crichton and others still thought that it was possible to convert James VI to Catholicism, and they also believed that the invasion of the Isle was aimed to assure James's accession to the throne of England.⁶²¹

On 26 February 1587, the negotiations in Brussels for an Anglo-Spanish peace started.⁶²² The Catholic noblemen of Scotland urged for Robert Bruce to be sent to see Mendoza with a letter urging Philip II to take on the enterprise.⁶²³ Bruce had recently been visiting Parma, who had agreed to send 6,000 soldiers if the Scots were able to arrange their transportation. Moreover, Parma had promised to give them 10,000 crowns.⁶²⁴ Thus, Robert Bruce showed letters from the Scottish Catholic nobles to Mendoza, assuring that 'el Rey de Escocia huviere embiado persona a pedir le ayudasse contra la Reyna de Inglaterra, sino fuera por el miedo que se le reusaria, por respeto de la religion.'⁶²⁵

⁶¹⁷ *CSP Span.*, iv, p. 159.

⁶¹⁸ Hicks, 'Cardinal Allen and the Society,' *The Month*, xiii (1931), pp. 111, 203.

⁶¹⁹ *CSP Span.*, iv, p. 68.

⁶²⁰ Eguiluz, *Persons*, p. 142.

⁶²¹ Parish, 'Robert Parsons and the English Counter-Reformation,' pp. 35-6.

⁶²² These negotiations lasted until 12 July 1588, when they finally failed. See BL, 'Manifesto against Elizabeth I,' 1588, Add. MS 48,035, fos. 101-15 and *ibid.*, Add. 4,155, fos. 21-67.

⁶²³ Mendoza to Philip II, 28 Feb. 1587. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 467-70.

⁶²⁴ Brown, 'The Making of a *Politique*,' pp. 161-2.

⁶²⁵ 'The King of Scotland would have sent a person to ask for help against the Queen of England, if it was not because of the fear that it [his request] would be refused, because of [his] religion.' Mendoza to Philip II, 6 Mar. 1587. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 483-8.

James had sent his last and urgent letter to Elizabeth to beg for his mother's life.⁶²⁶ For this, he had entered in dissension with the ministers, because these actions could raise the hopes that the Catholics held in James.⁶²⁷ If James showed himself as convertible to Catholicism, Philip's secret aspirations to the English throne would be destroyed. Moreover, if James adopted the Catholic faith it would be necessary to have him under the Spanish influence. Thus, Mendoza suggested to Philip II that he needed to obtain a declaration from the Pope excluding James as legitimate heir to the crown of England, which would subsequently, leave Philip as the clear heir to the three thrones.⁶²⁸ Obviously, with Mary dead in heretic hands, there would not be any Catholic prince who would oppose a Spanish enterprise. On the other hand, in case the Queen lived, she would marry someone of Philip's choosing, which would assure the succession. Nevertheless, if in the end the enterprise was undertaken, the troops would be guided by native Catholics, which Persons considered as the most important component for the success of the enterprise.⁶²⁹

Although by this time Mendoza believed that Mary's death was assured, he went to visit Beaton. During their meeting, Beaton received 8,000 crowns through the Spanish ambassador for James VI. On 28 February, Mendoza informed Philip of the execution of Mary, which had taken place on 18 February.⁶³⁰ A 'True relation of the death of the Queen of Scotland,' conveyed how Mary:

llamo a su mayordomo agradeciendo le sus serviçios y dixole que fuese a su hijo el rey quel se lo pagaria, pues ella no podia haçello y mandole que le dize en su nombre que abria su bendicion...que le dize de su parte al rrey su hijo que se declarase en creer y obrar ser catolico y conforme lo que solia dezirse su vida que antes que siese no aver hijo de rey que no catolico, luego se puso a orar.⁶³¹

⁶²⁶ Mary, *Letters*, pp. 224-7.

⁶²⁷ BL, 'Dissension with the ministers to pray for Queen Mary,' Add. MS 32,092, fo. 78.

⁶²⁸ Mendoza to Philip II, 6 Mar. 1587. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 483-8.

⁶²⁹ *CSP Span.*, iv, pp. 41-3.

⁶³⁰ *ibid.*, iv, p. 27; however, a letter from Paris claimed that the news of the decapitation of Mary Queen of Scots did not reached Paris until 5 Mar. 1587. BL, 'Avisso de Paris de la vida y martirio de la Serenissima Reyna Maria de Escocia, lo qual aconteció a 18 de Febrero de 1587,' Add. MS 20,915, fos. 3-9; see also BNM, 'Relación del suceso de la Serenísima Reina de Escocia [María Estuardo] condenada a muerte por la Reina de Inglaterra [Isabel I], su prima, en 16 de hebrero del año 1587,' MS/9855(h.58r.-60v) and MS 4512, fos. 43-73.

⁶³¹ '[the Queen of Scots] called her butler thanking him for his services and told him to go to her son, the king, because he would pay him, because she could not do it and ordered him [the butler] to tell him [James VI] that he had her blessing with him...to ask from her to the king, her son to declare in believe and practice to be Catholic, and according to what it used to be said, her life that she rather not have a son, than a non-Catholic king, then she started to pray.' BL, 'Verdadera relación de la muerte de la reyna de Escocia,' Add. MS 20,915, fos. 10-4.

Mendoza added: 'it would seem to be God's obvious design to bestow upon Your Majesty the crowns of these two kingdoms [England and Scotland].'⁶³² Now, only James VI stood in Philip II's way to claiming the throne of England for himself.⁶³³

In March, Persons sent a memorandum to Mendoza, advising him not to let the Pope know of Philip's desire in obtaining the throne of England. At least not until the Spanish invasion of the Isle had been successful, because he would be less magnanimous in his financial aid.⁶³⁴ Instead, if Philip II was able to show that his only reason to conquer the Isle was to re-establish the Catholic religion, the Pope would even ask the King of France for his collaboration with Philip.

Persons wrote a second memorial, this time directed to Philip II. The memorial was another genealogical study, in which it was explained that Philip, being king of Portugal, had this monarchy's rights of succession to the English throne through the house of Lancaster. Moreover, how Mary Tudor and Mary Stewart had made their wills in favour of Philip. Once again, Persons advised the King not to publish his interest to the English throne until the invasion was successfully completed.⁶³⁵

On 18 March, Persons sent the count of Olivares a document titled 'Considerations why it is desirable to carry through the Enterprise of England before discussing the Succession to the Throne of that country, claimed by this Majesty.' Once again, Persons advised Philip not to make public his pretension to the English throne. According to Persons this would just worsen the heresy on the Isle. Also, many princes and kings – Catholic and Protestant – would fear the Spanish domination of Europe; even France and the Pope could get jealous of Spain's power. Thus, if the others believed that Philip was going to carry out the enterprise to restore the Catholic faith, and to revenge Mary's death and the other many martyrs, the Catholics of the Isle would favour the enterprise in their prayers, writings and other aid. Moreover,

⁶³² Quoted in Mattingly, *The Defeat of the Spanish Armada*, pp. 84-5.

⁶³³ Lynch, *Spain under the Habsburgs*, i, p. 318.

⁶³⁴ Eguluz, *Persons*, p. 138.

⁶³⁵ Hicks, *Letters and Memorials of Father Robert Persons*, pp. 289-95.

Persons affirmed that using these same arguments Philip would be able to gain the assistance of the Pope and the King of France.⁶³⁶

Surprisingly, by advising Philip to lie to the Pope, Persons was breaking his sacred vow to the Church and the Pope.⁶³⁷ Not long before, Persons had been in favour of Mary's candidature to the throne of England; later, he had clearly showed himself in favour of James VI's pretension, of course, if he first became Catholic.⁶³⁸ Now, Persons, together with Allen, was the main supporter of the Spanish enterprise within the Church.⁶³⁹ Later in his life, Persons wrote concerning this period that:

But when upon the death of the Queen (Mary) we found that your King persevered in his heresy, I confess that both Allen, not yet made Cardinal, and I, showed ourselves to be slow to promote the interest of an heretical King...all hope was lost to us of the King's reduction; to every assertion you affirmed, both elsewhere and very often in Spain (which other pious and prudent men of our nation will confirm), that there was no use in hoping for the King's conversion to the Catholic faith, which subsequent events have fully proved. And so I allow that thenceforward Cardinal Allen and myself thought of something else than the King of Scotland, and that our one sole thought was, who was the fittest to be forwarded among all claimants for the purpose of restoring and establishing the Catholic religion and worship in our country; and since, we saw when considering and weighing the degrees of pretence, and the variety of claimants as to the hereditary right, without considering the matter of religion, as you also saw from the book recently brought the point of religion, that is whether they ought or could with safe conscience follow in a doubtful claim a pretender who was a heretic, or at least suspected as much, while there is plenty of Catholic pretenders.⁶⁴⁰

It was not until 31 March when Philip wrote to Mendoza expressing his sadness regarding the news of Mary's death. He asked Mendoza to give his condolences to the ambassador of Scotland and to pass them on to James VI, with his offer of friendship 'as which I always had with his mother;' and obviously, to let him know that whenever he would decide to become Catholic, James would have his help and favour for certain. Robert Bruce was appointed to go and inform the Catholic nobles that Philip could not give them the 6,000 soldiers they had requested, but he had decided to give them the money they asked for, and three or four months after they had liberated the King, he would send them the 150,000 crowns requested. The money was going to be taken from the money provided for the war in Flanders; thus, it also had to be made known to Parma, for obvious reasons, and also Guise, because he was

⁶³⁶ Eguiluz, *Persons*, pp. 146-7.

⁶³⁷ *ibid.*, p. 139.

⁶³⁸ *ibid.*, p. 148.

⁶³⁹ Hicks, *Letters and Memorials of Father Robert Persons*, pp. lxxiv-lxxv; Robert Persons, *Jesuit's Memorial for the Destruction of the Church of England*, ed. E. Gee (London, 1824), p. xlix.

⁶⁴⁰ Persons to Crichton, from Seville, 10 May 1596, printed in Tauton, *History of the Jesuits*, pp. 174-6.

the one who had sent Bruce to Mendoza. Philip wanted Bruce to return to Scotland and have a meeting with the three Catholic nobles, who would have to try to convert James to Catholicism; Philip had to make sure that the Catholics everywhere were thinking he had done everything possible to carry Catholicism to the British Isles before launching the invasion. Nevertheless, he had had to make sure that the offer to use the port of Kirkcudbright was still open and to get as much information about the Scottish port as possible.⁶⁴¹

Drake's famous attack on Cadiz in April 1587 was a clear insult to Philip II, which even a lesser monarch would not have left un-avenged.⁶⁴² On 27 April, Parma replied affirmatively to Philip's letter, which proposed that they should get the money for the rebels in Scotland from the budget set aside for the Netherlands.⁶⁴³ And by 3 May, Mendoza already had news from Scotland via Zeeland that Beaton claimed that James VI had ordered him to present letters to Philip asking for his aid. As proof of his good intentions, Beaton and the bishop of Ross, both loyal servants of the deceased Queen of Scots, had been restored to their temporal and spiritual dignities before the ministers and the public. However, Beaton had claimed that he would not become ambassador for James VI until he received a licence from the Pope.⁶⁴⁴ Mendoza was quite doubtful about these claims, and advised Philip to be prudent with this information.⁶⁴⁵ Only a few days before, on 12 May, M. de Courcelles had informed King Henry III that James had asked Beaton to request in his name help from the King of France and his relations and friends there. The French ambassador knew that they had already contacted Philip.⁶⁴⁶ Mary's execution had provoked her son to adopt an attitude of dangerous hostility towards England.

Elizabeth broke off all her relations with Spain and decided to re-approach James.⁶⁴⁷ The possibility of an alliance between Spain and Scotland frightened Elizabeth; thus, Walsingham wrote a letter to James trying to dissuade him from war against

⁶⁴¹ Philip II to Mendoza, 31 Mar. 1587. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 493-6.

⁶⁴² *Felipe II, un Monarca y su Época. La monarquía hispánica* (El Escorial, 1998), p. 333.

⁶⁴³ AGS, the duke of Parma to Philip II, 27 Apr. 1587, E Leg. 573.

⁶⁴⁴ Mendoza to Philip II, 3 May 1587. Teulet, *Relations*, v, p. 497.

⁶⁴⁵ AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, 20 May 1587, K 1566, fo. 128.

⁶⁴⁶ M. de Courcelles to Henry III, 12 May 1587. Mary, *Letters*, pp. 283-92.

⁶⁴⁷ M. de Chasteauneu to Henry III, 21 May 1587. Teulet, *Relations*, v, p. 203.

England.⁶⁴⁸ Elizabeth sought therefore to abandon her present policy in respect of James and give him the assurance of the English succession, which alone could make him her loyal supporter. On the other hand, she avoided all appearances of seeking peace with Philip, because it would be regarded as a proof of weakness and could provoke a more confident Spanish attack.⁶⁴⁹

Most of the political power of Europe was still in Catholic hands and Spain was still formidable. James's secret diplomacy aimed at securing his title with the Catholic as well as on the Protestant side, by professing his willingness to extend toleration to the English Catholics and posing as a possible, even a probable conversion to Catholicism himself. He made some progress because the Catholic world, yet again, lacked even the semblance of unity with France and the Pope being suspicious of Spain's policy.

On 15 June, Olivares informed Philip II that Persons and Allen had conceived the idea that Philip was less enthusiastic with the enterprise and that it was perceived that, despite the long passage of time, no decisions were being taken. Olivares added that both priests had used all their efforts to convince him that Mary's death had not impeded the matter, but as a result inconveniences, such as the protection of Mary's life during the invasion and after its success, had been avoided.⁶⁵⁰ Persons and Allen were engaged in writing books supporting the enterprise using the arguments that Olivares submitted to the Pope in February 1586.⁶⁵¹ They had assured Olivares that:

Creighton [Crichton] is keeping silent about the offer made by your Majesty to the Scot[tish] Catholics, and Allen and Melino [Persons] have done excellent service in arranging this. They are both fittingly zealous in his Majesty's interests, knowing how important it is to them that they should be so.

Crichton and his countrymen in Paris still believed that James could be converted.⁶⁵² Thus, the conversion of England could be achieved by securing James's succession to the throne of England. Olivares thought that the best thing was to deceive Crichton and the other supporters of the Scottish candidature to the English throne to prevent

⁶⁴⁸ BL, 'Letter to Sir Francis Walsingham dissuading him from war with England,' 1587, Stowe MS 142, fo. 27.

⁶⁴⁹ Wernham, *Before the Armada*, p. 399.

⁶⁵⁰ Mattingly, *The Defeat of the Spanish Armada*, p. 83.

⁶⁵¹ *CSP Span.*, iv, p. 122; Eguiluz, *Persons*, pp. 148-9.

⁶⁵² BL, 'Reasons to shewe the hasines of the enterprise. Out of the discourse found with Creighton the Scottish Jesuit,' Cott. MS Jul. F VI, fo. 58.

any attempt on their part to cause trouble.⁶⁵³ Twenty days later, the ambassador wrote to the King to report that he had met with Allen, and that he and Persons were extremely well disposed for the interests of the King,⁶⁵⁴ as Persons had already done in a memorandum to Philip II.⁶⁵⁵

Finally on 29 July 1587, Philip and the Pope signed a treaty for the papal collaboration in the enterprise of England. Thus, a good Catholic appointed by Philip would inherit the throne of England. The Pope made the compromise that he would support the Spanish expedition with one million gold crowns; half a million to be given when the Spanish troops landed on the Isle, and the rest in bi-monthly instalments.⁶⁵⁶ However, the Spanish intelligence system informed Philip that Sixtus V was still considering James's possible conversion.⁶⁵⁷ And in August, it was even rumoured that Colonel Stewart had gone to see Parma to discuss the possibility of a marriage between James and the Spanish *Infanta*.⁶⁵⁸

The rumours continued during the summer of 1587. Robert Carvill, an English intelligence officer, declared that a Scottish merchant, who was a 'friend' of the Spanish King, had gone to see James VI in Philip's name, offering to lend him the wage of 30,000 soldiers for three years or longer, if he would start a war with Elizabeth. Moreover, he assured that another Scottish man called Foster, a pensioner of Philip II, had gone over to Spain, having been sent by the Catholics of Scotland.⁶⁵⁹ In fact, Lord Maxwell, who had left Scotland for Spain after his unsuccessful uprising in May 1587, was trying to persuade Philip that James was sympathetic to the Catholic cause. According to Keith Brown, Maxwell was welcomed by Philip during their meeting on 18 August and was granted a pension of 5,000 crowns. At once, Maxwell departed for Lisbon, where he met with the marquis of Santa Cruz, the commander of the Armada. Santa Cruz exposed to him his deep belief that James was playing a double game, and that there was no assurance that he was sympathetic to the

⁶⁵³ *CSP Span.*, iv, p. 122; Eguiluz, *Persons*, pp. 148-9.

⁶⁵⁴ *CSP Span.*, iv, p. 130.

⁶⁵⁵ PRO, 'Father Persons' memorial to the King of Spain,' 1587, SP 94/2

⁶⁵⁶ AGS, 'Tratados,' July 1587, E Rome, Leg. 954; Elder, *Influences*, p. 140.

⁶⁵⁷ *CSP Span.*, iv, p. 107.

⁶⁵⁸ *CSP Scot.*, ix, p. 384.

⁶⁵⁹ *ibid.*, ix, p. 396.

Catholic cause. During their meeting, Maxwell was finally forced to recognise that there were no Scottish ports deep enough for a possible landing of the Armada.⁶⁶⁰

On 2 October, Robert Bruce went to Mendoza⁶⁶¹ assuring that there still was hope for James's conversion.⁶⁶² Mendoza had also been contacted by some of the servants of the late Queen of Scots. Her apothecary had gone to see him, in the company of Madam Curle – one of Mary's ladies-in-waiting – with a letter handwritten by the dead Queen, as they had been ordered by Mary to give it to Mendoza. As a token, Mary had sent him a diamond worth 200 crowns. The letter was a last confession of the Queen that she died in the Catholic faith and with the knowledge that her son was not a Catholic, she renounced her rights to the three crowns – England, Ireland and Scotland – to Philip II. However, she begged Philip to do as much as he could for the conversion of her son to the Catholic religion.⁶⁶³ Moreover, with the dispatch was accompanied by 'a book of various poems which have been written on the death of the Queen of Scotland.'⁶⁶⁴

Philip replied to Mendoza on 27 November commenting on what Bruce had written and that he did not have any hope for James's conversion. He asked Mendoza to send Bruce back to Scotland to take care of the affairs there, where the situation had probably improved after the arrival of the earl of Morton, to whom 1,000 crowns were given for him to go to Lisbon and another 4,000 for his return to Scotland.⁶⁶⁵ Spain needed as many supporters inside the realm of Scotland as she could muster before the enterprise commenced.

⁶⁶⁰ Brown, 'The Making of a *Politique*,' pp. 163-4.

⁶⁶¹ Mendoza to Philip II, 8 Nov. 1587. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 423-6.

⁶⁶² AGS, Robert Bruce to Mendoza, 2 Oct. 1587, K 1565, fo. 60; however, very surprisingly, Bruce's main reason to go to see Mendoza was to get from him 10,000 crowns that the duke of Parma had sent to the Spanish ambassador to be given to Bruce. This sum was that monetary compensation for a plan that Bruce had created for the invasion of the Isle. In this plan nothing was mentioned about James's conversion to Catholicism. The plan was that thirty ships would be hired in Scotland to go to Danzig to load wheat. Five or four captains would be bribed to guide the vessels to Dunkirk, arriving there by the middle of the summer. Another thirty ships would be carried to Dunkirk from Scotland, under several excuses. These ships would be used for the transport of the troops to be sent into Scotland. *CSP Scot.*, ix, pp. 686, 691, 692-3, 698, 674.

⁶⁶³ Mendoza to Philip II, 24 Oct. 1587. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 497-500.

⁶⁶⁴ *CSP Span.*, iii, p. 159; Emerson, *Images of a Queen*, p. 163.

⁶⁶⁵ Philip II to Mendoza, 27 Nov. 1587. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 504-9.

The Rise of Colonel William Sempill and the Spanish Armada, 1587-1588

Colonel William Sempill, a Scotsman who had entered into Philip II's service in 1582,⁶⁶⁶ and Captain Battista Piatti, an engineer from Milan, were appointed by Philip to create maps of the coast of the British Isles for the enterprise. Sempill was trying to dissuade Philip against the Armada, and at the same time trying to gain a position as adviser in the Spanish court. He insisted that the same results could be achieved with less expenditure and without the risk of a possible failure with such a large Armada and without a friendly port from where to land. He advised Philip to pursue the English commerce and make an indirect war against England, taking advantage of the intelligence in Scotland and the Netherlands. Thus, he proposed to provide the Scottish nobles with money and weapons to start a war, and then use the Isle of Wight as base for the Armada to start a more secure invasion.⁶⁶⁷

Philip II was not dissuaded, but decided to send Sempill to Paris to serve Mendoza, and advise him and Parma on his dealings with the Scottish Catholic nobles in light of the proposed enterprise against England.⁶⁶⁸ Philip also warned the ambassador to be cautious in dealing with Sempill as he was 'a Scotch.'⁶⁶⁹

Sempill arrived in Paris by mid-December, and by the end of the month, Mendoza was already able to report that he found him very trustworthy.⁶⁷⁰ Soon, Sempill became an indispensable agent, the adviser and confidant of all those who considered themselves enemies of Elizabeth, as a consequence of her repression of the religion in Scotland. Everybody approached him for his consultation, including Philip II himself, his ambassadors and ministers, the Jesuits and the exiled, as he had built a reputation of being the most informed man on Scottish affairs. The purpose that consumed him was the invasion of the Isle and the restoration of the Catholic religion to Scotland.

⁶⁶⁶ NLS, 'Historie of Scotland, since the death of King James the first until the death of King James the sixth,' 1587, ADV MS 35.5.3; SCA, 'Razones por saver si escosia es deseando al Rey d'España,' CA4/9/10; about his later life as founder of the Scots College in Madrid see Taylor, *The Scots College in Spain*.

⁶⁶⁷ Duro, *Armada*, i, pp. 33, 158-9.

⁶⁶⁸ BNM, 'documentos diversos,' est. H, cod. 50, fo. 469; Fernández de Navarrete, *Biblioteca Marítima Española*, i, p. 608.

⁶⁶⁹ Philip II to Mendoza, 27 Nov. 1587. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 504-9; see also *DNB*, p. 1177.

⁶⁷⁰ Mendoza to Philip II, 22 Dec. 1587. Teulet, *Relations*, v, pp. 510-5; their friendship was long lasting, as it can be seen in SCA, 'Don Bernardino de Mendoza, former Spanish ambassador in London: attestation in favour of Colonel Semple,' 24 Apr. 1602, CA4/1/17.

While Sempill was working with Mendoza preparing the enterprise in Paris, Colonel Stewart was collaborating with Parma in the Netherlands.⁶⁷¹

At the end of January 1588, Lord Maxwell met with Mendoza and Sempill; he intended to persuade them, yet again, of James VI's good disposition towards Catholicism. Mendoza consulted Parma, who decided that Colonel Sempill should go to Scotland in a final attempt to persuade James to join Spain in the enterprise.⁶⁷² However, Mendoza contravened Parma's commands and ordered Sempill to wait until April, when he would accompany Maxwell on his return to Scotland.⁶⁷³

In February 1588, Elizabeth gave instructions to Sir John Norris and Sir Francis Drake to command a navy to attack the coast of Spain with the intention of capturing the treasures returning from the Indies, which would obstruct Philip's preparations for his invasion of England.⁶⁷⁴ This probably finally convinced Philip that he needed to launch the Armada against England.

At the same time, pressure was mounting on Scotland, as for some time after Mary's death, feelings between the English and Scots had become bitter,⁶⁷⁵ and James was starting to fear a rebellion in the north of his kingdom. The earl of Huntly, together with Lord Claude Hamilton, had contacted Parma, asking for 50,000 crowns to organise a revolt in the north of Scotland.⁶⁷⁶ A General Assembly of the Kirk, convened in the town of Old Aberdeen, on 6 February 1588, to complain to the King that the Jesuit Fathers James Gordon, Edmund Hay, Alexander McQuhirrie, John Scot, Alexander Meldrum and Arthur Panton were preaching in the north of the country.⁶⁷⁷ In less than one month, rumours were circulating Europe that 100 Spaniards had allegedly landed in England and seized a port called 'Baldras' near the

⁶⁷¹ *CSP Scot.*, ix, p. 431.

⁶⁷² Brown, 'The Making of a *Politique*,' p. 164.

⁶⁷³ *ibid.*, p. 165.

⁶⁷⁴ BL, 'Instructions for Sir John Norris and Sir Francis Drake commanding the armye that is to goe vpon the Coaste of Spayne,' 23 Feb. 1588, Eg. MS 2,541, i, fo. 5.

⁶⁷⁵ See Rait & Cameron (eds.), *King James's Secret Negotiations between Elizabeth and James VI relating to the Execution of Mary Queen of Scots from the Warrender Papers* (London, 1927), which deals with James's attitude to his mother's execution and some of the interactions between James and the nobility in Scotland.

⁶⁷⁶ *CSP Span.*, iv, p. 204; Elder, *Influences*, p. 149.

⁶⁷⁷ *Acts of proceedings of the General Assemblies of the Kirk of Scotland, from 1560* (Maitland Club, 1839-45), p. 716.

Scottish border, which was most likely Berwick-upon-Tweed; however, the fleet was still massing in Lisbon harbour, and did not set sail for another two months.⁶⁷⁸

It was on 16 April, just a month before the Armada was launched, when Sempill and Maxwell sailed for Scotland. They had to convince the Scottish lords to wait until the Armada reached Scotland to create a diversion, and only then, to seize the port of Leith. Immediately upon arrival, Sempill and Maxwell called upon a meeting by the Catholic nobles. According to Keith Brown, Maxwell believed that the Armada would not sail, and proposed to seize the initiative themselves. But the others knew that without the Spanish aid such a plot was impossible and dismissed his opinion.⁶⁷⁹

The English were also feeling the increasing danger from Spain, and the kingdom was put on a military alert to resist the invasion, as the Armada had readied itself for sea in May, and knew that they needed to secure at least neutrality, hopefully friendship, of their northern neighbours. Elizabeth decided to send Lord Hunsdon to Scotland to persuade James not to listen to the Spaniards. Thus, she wrote to James: 'I hope you will take Ulysses' wax to save you from such sirens.'⁶⁸⁰

The news of a Catholic rebellion in the north of Scotland shuddered Scotland. In fact, it was a skirmish with Lord Herries over their authority to negotiate a peace after the Laird of Johnstone's death. However, the Privy Council, fearing that there could be a rising in favour for Spain, accused Maxwell of conspiring against the country.⁶⁸¹ Moreover, Elizabeth was still unsure of James's loyalties.⁶⁸² James, trying to demonstrate his Protestantism, took action by firstly expelling the Jesuits from the realm, and challenging one of them to a public debate. Also, he hastened north deciding to put an end to Maxwell's rebellion,⁶⁸³ for which he was rewarded with a sum of £3,000 by Elizabeth, which made the total that she had given him £5,000 for that year.⁶⁸⁴

⁶⁷⁸ ASF, 'Avisso,' 19 Mar. 1588, MdP, 3085, c. 621. Thanks to Brendan Dooley.

⁶⁷⁹ Brown, 'The Making of a *Politique*,' p. 165.

⁶⁸⁰ Elizabeth I to James VI, c. 11 May 1588. Elizabeth, *Letters*, pp. 192-3.

⁶⁸¹ Brown, 'The Making of a *Politique*,' p. 166.

⁶⁸² BL, 'Letters of Queen Elizabeth to James VI,' 15 May 1588, Add. MS 23,240, fo. 69.

⁶⁸³ Calderwood, *History*, iv, pp. 678-9.

⁶⁸⁴ Donaldson, *Scotland*, p. 185; Forbes-Leith, *Narratives*, p. 216.

On 10 May, Burghley was informed that Mary's death had provoked a severe crisis amongst leading Catholics, which resulted in the creation of two factions. The first was composed of Allen, Persons⁶⁸⁵ and Owen, who desired to advance Philip II's title. The second consisted of Morgan, Paget, Lord Paget and Throckmorton, who supported James's interests in the throne of England.⁶⁸⁶ But the alliances could change, and Olivares reported to Philip that:

Cardinal Allen and Robert Persons are apprehensive lest the Pope should give credit to the religion of the King of Scotland, but up to the present there is nothing apparently suspicious on this point. They (i.e., Allen, Persons, etc.), are greatly afraid that his Majesty may favour and side with the English and the Scottish and French faction, against whom they are much aggrieved; especially in consequence of two books which they have printed against them (i.e., against the English of the Spanish party).⁶⁸⁷

Nevertheless, some Catholic nobles, such as the earls of Crawford and Errol, Lord Herries, along with other lords, lairds and ladies, were still welcoming the prospect of a Spanish invasion as a way to restore the old faith in Scotland. However, Huntly, Maxwell and Lord Claude Hamilton, in association with Crichton, were planning James VI's conversion after the Spanish invasion.⁶⁸⁸

Obviously, this was a plan that the Spanish would not accept; Philip wanted to gain the throne of England for Spain. However, the Scots also knew that a Spanish conquest of England would very likely be followed by one of Scotland,⁶⁸⁹ and maybe by the loss of their local powers. Spain continued with their arrangements for the Great Armada. Parma was assembling a monumental force in Nieuport of various nationalities, including 30 regiments of Italians, 10 Walloons, 8 of Scots, and 8 of Burgundians.⁶⁹⁰ The Armada, after much delay, set off at the end of May 1588. The Spanish fleet was composed of 131 ships, with 7,000 mariners, 17,000 soldiers and around 1,300 officials. As well as warships (galleons, galleasses, galleys and large, armed merchant ships) the large Spanish fleet also included cargo ships (merchants ships and hulks) which carried stores of food and drink and all the equipment

⁶⁸⁵ This same year of 1588, Father Allen and Persons had published their 'Manifesto against Elizabeth.' BL, S.J Persons, 'Manisfesto against Elizabeth I composed,' 1588, Add. MS 48,035, fos. 235-6b.

⁶⁸⁶ *CSP Scot.*, ix, p. 348; this division was clearly explained in Morey, *The Catholic Subjects of Elizabeth I*, pp. 119-20.

⁶⁸⁷ AGS, the count-duke of Olivares to Philip II, without date, E Leg. 951; *CSP Span.*, iv, p. 324.

⁶⁸⁸ Forbes-Leith, *Narratives*, p. 216.

⁶⁸⁹ S. Mowat, *The Port of Leith: its history and its people* (Edinburgh, 1994), p. 142.

⁶⁹⁰ Parker, *The Grand Strategy*, p. 236.

necessary for the invasion – siege guns and other weapons, horses, mules, tents and other supplies. Two of the ships were to act as hospital ships. The larger ships of the Armada were served by smaller vessels – zabras and pataches – which took messages from ship to ship, from ship to shore and also sailed ahead as scouts.⁶⁹¹ Although it was the largest Armada the world had ever seen, the duke of Medina Sidonia unsuccessfully tried to refuse the command of it, since he believed that the armada was inadequate for the enterprise. As late as at the end of June, he continued to beg the King to consider calling off the Armada.⁶⁹²

Meanwhile, the preparations of the Spanish navy had been noticed by the English.⁶⁹³ There were two main discussions in England: how an immediate peace should be made with Spain and how to be prepared in case of war.⁶⁹⁴ Obviously, great preparations were made to detain the Spaniards.⁶⁹⁵ In Scotland during May, the King, three earls and 200 barons and lairds had resolved to face off the possible Spanish invasion of the Isle through their kingdom. Thus, ships were prepared at the ports of Leith and Dundee to confront the Spaniards.⁶⁹⁶

Meanwhile, Sempill was trying to obtain an interview with James VI. Fernandez Duro claimed that Sempill was sent as a special envoy of Philip II to offer him 42,000 gold crowns to revenge the death of his mother.⁶⁹⁷ George Conn was the first to suggest that the Spanish monarch's final intention was to dispatch Sempill to James VI of

⁶⁹¹ LNMM, 'Letters with autograph signature *Yo el Rey* 1585-1588,' HSR/HF/2-4; for the numbers offered by the English espionage before the arrival of the fleet to their coasts see BL, 'Una enumeracion de no. de soldados, barcos, capitanes etc de la Armada,' Cott. MS Vesp. Cviii, fo. 205.

⁶⁹² P. Pierson, *Commander of the Armada: the seventh duke of Medina Sidonia* (New Haven, 1989), pp. 117-20.

⁶⁹³ PRO, 'Preparations in Spain,' SP 94/2; see also Fugger's letter from Madrid, 18 May 1588, 'the great Armada is made ready to put to sea.' V. Von Klarwill (ed.), *The Fugger's letters* (London, 1928), pp. 134-5.

⁶⁹⁴ BL, 'A consideracion howe a peace may be made with safetie betwene her Majestie and the Kinge of Spaine, and if not how a warre may be mayneteyned,' Cott. MS Vesp. C viii, fos. 2-9b.

⁶⁹⁵ See BL, 'Queene Elizabeth's whole army at se agaynst the Spanish forces in anno 1588,' Eg. MS 2,541, I, fo. 401; BL, 'Queene Elizabeth's whole army at se agaynst the Spanish forces in anno 1588: list of the ships, with number of men and names of captains,' 1588-1649, Eg. MS 2,541, I, fos. 1-4; see also PRO, 'Plan to divert the King of Spain's forces – 2 papers,' 1588, SP 84/63; as curiosity see BL, 'Extract from the report of the arrangements for the defence on the occasion of the Spanish Armada. Drawn by John Bruce, Esqw by order of the government when Bonaparte threatened the invasion of England, in 1798, printed not published,' Add. MS 33,923, fos. 192-3

⁶⁹⁶ Mowat, *The Port of Leith*, p. 142.

⁶⁹⁷ Duro, *Armada*, i, p. 159; *DNB*, p. 1177.

Scotland in order to carry out negotiations for the intended marriage of James with the Spanish *Infanta*.⁶⁹⁸ In fact, Sempill had been sent with two commissions, the public one for James VI of Scotland, and a secret commission ‘to be used for the benefit of the Spanish crown, to lead the nobility when the army from Flanders would come into the island.’⁶⁹⁹

Sempill himself, in a letter to Philip III, from the early seventeenth century, commented that:

el año de 88 me mando yr con comision al rey Jacovo descosia para ofrecerle gente y dineros para vengar la muerte de la reyna su madre que el año antes avian degollado en Ingra llevando conmigo letra de cambio de 500 escudos (de oro) para gasto secretos con orden secreto de no executar nada hasta segunda orden, que el duque de parma me avia de enviar para no reponiendo el rey Jacobo, en lo que deviera como lo hizo, en tal caso entrar en en g[ue]r[ra] con la gente escocesa de 300 hombre alistados de secreto del sequito de la nobleza que avia de llevar a mi cargo.⁷⁰⁰

The 500 gold crowns were given to him by Andrés de Alba, from Alava in Spain. A married business man living at the time in Rouen.⁷⁰¹

The actual public letter of Sempill’s commission to James VI can be found in Catholic Archives of Scotland at Columba House, in Latin.⁷⁰² The secret commission is also kept in these archives, which, in political terms, is much more interesting. There are two documents that the Colonel denoted as secret commissions from Philip II to negotiate with James before the arrival of the Armada.

⁶⁹⁸ *DNB*, p. 1177; on this matter see BL, ‘Raisons et considerations sur le mariage futur du Roy d’Ecosse,’ Add. MS 36,530, fo. 4.

⁶⁹⁹ SCA, ‘Clase de papeles del Coronel Sempill.’ 15 Oct. 1620, CA4/3/13; W. Sempill kept among his papers also drafts of the commission to James VI. See SCA, ‘Cartas para el rey de escosia de la comission y protection del Coronel Sempill,’ May 1588, CA4/1/4; and, ‘Single sheet docketed ‘papeles tocantes a la persona del Fundador, sus comisiones y negocios, son 23 en numero todos.’ SCA, ‘James by the Grace of God King of Scottish to all sundrie...’ 1588, CA4/1/5; see also SCA, ‘Alano Hamilton cavallero escoces S. de Forgaslei. Declaración de la nobleza de Scocia,’ CA 4/9/13.

⁷⁰⁰ ‘the year of [15]88 he [Philip II] sent me with a commission to King James of Scotland to offer him people and money to revenge the death of the Queen, his mother, whom the year before had been beheaded in England, carrying with me letter of change of 500 (gold) crowns for secret expediture with secret order not to commence anything until receipt of a second order, which the duke of Parma had to send me; so not responding King James in the way he should, as he did, enter in war with the people of Scotland with 300 men enlisted secretly from the retinue of the nobility who I should carry under my lead.’ SCA, ‘Razones por saver si escosia es deseando al Rey d’España,’ CA4/9/10.

⁷⁰¹ SCA, Colonel W. Sempill to the count-duke of Olivares, 28 Sept. 1627, CA4/4/20.

⁷⁰² SCA, ‘Clase de papeles del Colonel Sempill,’ 1587, CA4/10/10.

The first letter had seven clauses for James VI: the first one was that James should renounce any right – civil, divine or by conquest – that he would have to the crowns of England and Ireland. In return, Philip II would compensate him with 100,000 crowns before the beginning the Spanish invasion of England. In addition, 12,000 paid and armed soldiers would be sent during the said war, or a combination of troops and money, or even money alone, depending of Philip's desire. Also, Philip would have an ambassador in Scotland to deal with issues of war or peace.⁷⁰³

The second document was more focused on religious matters. Its first, and most important, clause was the conversion of James and his realm to Catholicism; thus, pardoning the Catholics in his realm, calling them from their exiles and restoring their goods, estates and honours. In addition, he would grant liberty of conscience and protect all the English Catholics who would pass to his country.⁷⁰⁴ Politically, James would have to sign a defensive and offensive league with Philip; and wage war against England in Scotland, England, and Ireland. For this, he would give order for all the Scottish soldiers, captains, pilots and men of war in general, serving in Holland and Zeeland, to abandon the English and all the other enemies of Spain. James would help Spain with 10,000 paid soldiers in the war in Flanders. Thus, James would send two ambassadors, two noblemen from his kingdom, to reside in Spain and Flanders. Once the war was finished in those lands, he would aid, with the same number of men, in the war against the Turks. Finally, James would have to pledge his future son to be carried to Spain.⁷⁰⁵

Fernandez Duro wrote that James, trying to gain Sempill's assistance, promised him the earldom of the Hebrides.⁷⁰⁶ However, the reports of the English intelligence system did not shed much light on the aims of the final secret commission given to Sempill. Yet, William Asheby informed Walsingham that 'the offers of the Spaniards

⁷⁰³ SCA, 'Por partidos que el Rey de Escocia ofrece a su Mag[esta]d. Cath[olica]. Por el bien de entramos reys,' CA4/9/16.

⁷⁰⁴ SCA, 'Por partidos que el Rey de Escocia ofrece a su Mag[esta]d. Cath[olica]. Por el bien de entramos reys,' CA4/9/15; for a good account of the dilemma between being a good Catholic or good Englishman see Bald (ed.), *An Humble Supplication to her Maiestie by Robert Southwell* (Cambridge, 1953), p. xii.

⁷⁰⁵ SCA, 'Por partidos que el Rey de Escocia ofrece a su Mag[esta]d. Cath[olica]. Por el bien de entramos reys,' CA4/9/15

⁷⁰⁶ Duro, *Armada*, ii, p. 159.

are great – to give him pay for 20,000 footmen and 5,000 horses.’⁷⁰⁷ This seems to point towards the first commission, as it was of a more military and political nature.

The negotiations for the Anglo-Spanish treaty of peace, that had started on 26 February 1587, concluded unsuccessfully on 12 July 1588.⁷⁰⁸ By 29 July, Walsingham received a letter from William Asheby, written five days earlier, informing of the ‘touching the appearing of the Spanish fleet upon the coast of the west country;’⁷⁰⁹ but by the end of the month the Armada was driven northwards by tempests.⁷¹⁰ The danger of the Spaniards landing in Scotland seemed imminent.

Since the beginning, the Spanish enterprise seemed destined to failure. J. Conway – an English agent – informed from Ostende that:

The most part of their shippes with leaking weare half full of water. The count Barlamournt having xii shippes appointed for this regencie found them all in that case...they say and swere publickly that the Duke of Parma holdes good correspondence with they Q[ueen] of England.⁷¹¹

At the beginning of July, Elizabeth was still unsure if James’s loyalty lay with her;⁷¹² but, by August, it was clear that James had taken the side of England.⁷¹³ Thus, on 1 August, Elizabeth wrote:

Now may appear, my dear Brother, how malice conjoined with might strivest to make a shameful end to a villanous beginning, for, by God’s singular favour, having their fleet well beate in our Narrow Seas, and pressing with all violence, to achieve some watering place, to continue their pretended invasion, the winds have carried them to your coasts, where I doubt not they shall receive small succour and less welcome; unless those Lords that, so traitors like, would belie their own Prince, and promise another King relief in your name, be suffered to live at liberty, to dishonour you...But for all this, for your self sake, let not the friends of Spain be suffered to yield them force; for though I fear not in the end the sequel, yet if, by leaving them unhelped, you may increase the English hearts unto you.⁷¹⁴

⁷⁰⁷ BL, William Asheby to Francis Walsingham, 3 Aug. 1588, Cott. MS Calig. D.I., fo. 257; *CSP Scot.*, ix, pp. 589-91

⁷⁰⁸ BL, ‘Draft of treaty of peace between Spain and England,’ 1587, Add. MS 48,035, fos. 101-15; see also BL, ‘Bond of support of his James VI right to the crown of England,’ 1599, Add. MS 4,155, fos. 21-67.

⁷⁰⁹ *CSP Scot.*, ix, p. 478.

⁷¹⁰ The diary from 22 July to 7 August 1588 of the events of the Armada can be found in the *CODOIN*, xiv, pp. 449-62.

⁷¹¹ BL, J. Conway, from Ostende, Aug. 1588, Cott. MS Jul. F vi, fos. 60b-1.

⁷¹² BL, Elizabeth I to James VI, 9 July 1588, Add. MS 23,240, fo. 73.

⁷¹³ *ibid.*, fo. 79.

⁷¹⁴ Elizabeth, *Letters*, pp. 193-4

On this day, James VI was travelling to the north chasing the Catholic Lords – the earls of Errol, Huntly and Angus.⁷¹⁵ Sempill was near Glasgow, having landed in Dundee in late July, ‘greatly comforted, and looking daily for the Spaniards there.’⁷¹⁶ Secretly, Sempill had already met Sorley Boy Macdonnell,⁷¹⁷ Hugh O’Neil and Rory O’Donnell in Ireland.⁷¹⁸ Sempill’s presence increased the threat of revolt in Scotland, boosted also by the approach of the Spanish. Moreover, Parma had sent William Chisholm, the bishop of Dunblane, back to Scotland to assist the forces in the northern parts of the realm.⁷¹⁹ On 5 August, Huntly wrote to Parma urging the enterprise and complained of the slowness of the ‘Spanish resolutions.’⁷²⁰

Meanwhile, James VI was trying to demonstrate his full loyalty to the converted faith and Elizabeth, declared his earnest intention to ‘suppress papists and Papistry in the realm, yet the great papists still lie there safely and have great hope to get shortly their hearts’ desire through the Spaniards.’⁷²¹ Under this real danger of a rebellion in Scotland, spurred by the approaching Spaniards and the work of their allies in the north of the realm, William Asheby decided to make several offers to James to satisfy him and his nobility, passing the bounds of his instructions to assure their loyalty. Among the promises the most substantial were: the payment of 20,000 footmen and 5,000 horsemen; a pension of £5,000 per year; a sustained guard of 50 Scots gentlemen for the King’s security and three commanders.⁷²²

On Saturday 6 August, news was passed to James that the Spanish fleet had landed in Moray Firth, in the earl of Moray’s country, circa 100 miles from Edinburgh. The intelligence officers were concerned with this because the earl was son of Lord

⁷¹⁵ *CSP Scot.*, ix, p. 588.

⁷¹⁶ In the *DNB*, it was claimed that ‘Sempill landed at Leith early in August 1588,’ *DNB*, p. 1177; however, by 1 August the presence of Sempill in Glasgow was already confirmed. *CSP Scot.*, ix, p. 482.

⁷¹⁷ See J.M. Hill, *Fire and Sword: Sorley Boy MacDonnell and the rise of Clan Ian Mor, 1538-1590* (London, 1993); after the failure of the Armada, Sorley Boy helped the survivors of the *Girona* to pass from Ireland to Scotland. See Martin & Parker, *The Spanish Armada*, p. 225.

⁷¹⁸ Duro, *Armada*, ii, p. 159.

⁷¹⁹ *CSP Scot.*, ix, p. 507; William Chisholm had left years ago his bishopric of Dunblane to become a monk under Carthusian order, but had been sent back to Scotland in the late 1580s by the Pope Sixtus V.

⁷²⁰ Brown, ‘The Making of a *Politique*,’ p. 168.

⁷²¹ *CSP Scot.*, ix, p. 482; for more specialised work see Pollit, ‘The Defeat of the Northern Rebellion and the Shaping of the Anglo-Scottish Relations,’ *SHR*, lxiv (1985).

⁷²² BL, William Asheby to Walsingham, 3 Aug. 1588, Cott. MS Calig. D.I., fo. 257; J. Goodare, ‘James VI’s English Subsidy,’ in Goodare & Lynch, *The Reign of James VI*, pp. 114-6.

Doune, who had always been suspected of being a Catholic. The city of Edinburgh decided to increase its guard to 500 footmen.⁷²³ James Grant affirmed in his introduction, that although provisions were made for land defence, no naval preparations seemed to have been made, nor had ships been made available to apprehend the landings.⁷²⁴ On an entry in the *Extracts from the Records of the City of Edinburgh*, dated 9 August it was claimed that:

and that thre hunder men of weir be rayset vpoun the townis charges for defence of the toun and resisting of the said enemy; and for this purpose ordanis the sowne of thre thouwsand and fyve merk to be tayne vpoun the commoun guid to pay thair wadges, vpoun annuell, quhill at mair oportunity the sam may be releuit be ane extent.⁷²⁵

By 10 August, the Spanish fleet was beaten, but the fear of the invasion was still casting a shadow on a confusing time in Scotland. It was believed that the Spanish fleet was going to ‘bend there course to some part of Scotland and joyne with the northern lordes, which are combined together, and have had intelligence along tyme with the Prince of Parma, beyng solicited by Coronall Simple [William Sempill] of this countrey, and the beshope of Dublin. [Dunblane]’⁷²⁶

On 12 August, Sir Henry Widdrington informed Lord Hunsdon that a cockboat had landed in Scotland. Twelve or fourteen of the Spaniards left the ship to be conveyed to meet Colonel Sempill at Edinburgh.⁷²⁷ Lord Seymour hurried to inform Elizabeth that their intention was to force James to leave his country.⁷²⁸ Once in the burgh, the Spaniards had a conference with Sempill, but the secret interview was discovered. The Spaniards were arrested and put under ward. Once in prison they confessed that there were 100 soldiers with victuals and munitions in their ship. Nevertheless, Sempill escaped and took to the road in great haste for Bothwell, at his house of Creighton, eight miles from Edinburgh. Sir James Carmichael pursued and apprehended him, and brought him back to Edinburgh to be examined by the Council. James decided to commit Sempill to the same prison where Lord Maxwell was imprisoned after his rebellion in the previous May, and committed Lord Maxwell to

⁷²³ BL, Sir Henry Widdrington to Hunsdon, Cott. MS Caling. D.I., fo. 276; *CSP Scot.*, ix, pp. 595-6.

⁷²⁴ J. Grant, *The Old Scots Navy* (NRS, 1914), p. 128.

⁷²⁵ *Edin. Recs.*, iii, p. 527.

⁷²⁶ *CSP Scot.*, ix, p. 593.

⁷²⁷ *ibid.*, ix, p. 594.

⁷²⁸ Lord Seymour to the Council, 16 Aug. 1588. J.K. Laughton (ed.), *State Papers relating to the*

the Black Ness.⁷²⁹ We will never know the total number of Scots committed to the Armada, but it should be noted that, for example, in the list of pilots of the Armada there is a John Gordon, quite probably a Scot.⁷³⁰

By Friday 12 August, it was clear that the threat of a Spanish invasion was past, and the following Friday, 19 August, Elizabeth I delivered her famous speech at Tilbury.⁷³¹ However, on 22 August, the scattered Armada was seen in Orkney and Shetland, trying to make their way back to Spain.⁷³²

The total losses were calculated as: 8,000 dead, 2 ships abandoned by the enemy, 3 lost in the sea near France, 2 near the Netherlands, 2 sunk during battle, 17 wrecked in Ireland, 2 in Scotland and 35 of which final destiny is unknown; a total of 63 units lost.⁷³³

Defeat of the Spanish Armada, anno 1588, ii (NRS, 1894), p. 120.

⁷²⁹ BL, Widdrington to Hunsdon, Cott. MS Calig. D.I., fo. 276; *CSP Scot.*, ix, pp. 595-6.

⁷³⁰ E. Hardy, *Survivors of the Armada* (London, 1966), p. 144; Duro, *Armada*, ii, p. 201.

⁷³¹ BL, 'Acccount of the Spanish Armada,' Add. MS 15,057, fo. 60b; *Life and Glorious Reign of Queen Elizabeth. Containing her great victories by land and sea; and her other successes against the enemies of the Protestant religion. Including 'an account of the destruction of the great fleet, called the Spanish Armada'* (London, 1708), p. 9.

⁷³² Mowat, *The Port of Leith*, p. 142.

⁷³³ Duro, *Armada*, ii, p. 60.

CHAPTER III

The Aftermath of the Spanish Armada, 1588-1592

Wrecks and Survivors, 1588-1589

By the end of August 1588, there still were rumours in Scotland that the defeated Spanish fleet had sailed to the Isle of Orkney.⁷³⁴ Immediately, the news of the partial retreat of the Armada to Orkney had crossed Europe. A very interesting illustration of this is the following ‘Aviso from Antwerp,’ dated 3 September 1588:

Questa sera si sono havute lettere di Londra delli 29 passato con avviso che l’armata Catt[oli]ca si trovava in Scotia in una isola chiamata Hylandia presso le Orcades, havendo buonissima intelligenza con scriversi che li davano vettovaglie et altri rinfrescamenti, al cui re era inteso vogliano alcuni che havesse fatto publicare pena la vita a chi li portasse cosa alcuna, aggiungendo che tutta Scotia si trovava in armata a favore della regina d’Inghiterra nella cui corte il Drago insieme con l’armiraglio erano stati alcuni havendo atteso a riscurcitare la loro armata molto mal trattate dalla Cattolica con animo di andar di nuovo a rincontrarla haver di gia fatto il Drago con 180 vele.⁷³⁵

The English agents’ reports were full of confusion. Mr. Asheby certified ‘that this fleyt passed betwixt Orkney and Shetland to the Fayre Island, and compassynge Ireland have taken there course for Spayne.’ On the other hand, Sir Robert Bowes informed Walsingham that it was thought that ‘the Spaniards dare not return to Spain before the execution of their enterprise against England.’⁷³⁶ Thus, by mid-September, Robert Scott, a merchant from Edinburgh, was employed by Sir Robert Sidney to discover the whereabouts of the Spanish fleet. Scott sent one of his servants to the isles to gain intelligence of the Spaniards there and of the dealings of the northern lords with Parma. This agent had orders to write directly to Walsingham.⁷³⁷

⁷³⁴ *CSP Scot.*, ix, p. 602.

⁷³⁵ ‘This evening there were letters from London dated the 29th of last month, which news that the Catholic Armada was in Scotland, at an island called Hylandia in the area of the Orkneys. According to high reliable sources, the men were given provisions and other refreshments and when word reached the king [James VI of Scotland] some would have it that he decreed the death penalty for anyone who gave them anything. It was also noted that all of Scotland had taken arms in support of the Queen of England [Elizabeth I]. The Dragon [Francis Drake] and the Admiral [Charles Lord Howard of Effingham] were at her court for a few days, working to rehabilitate their fleet, which had suffered at the hands of the Catholics. They were eager for another engagement and it is said that they have already embarked with 180 ships.’ ASF, ‘Aviso from Antwerp,’ 3 Sept. 1588, MdP, 3085, c. 669. Thanks to Brendan Dooley.

⁷³⁶ BL, Sir Robert Bowes to Walsingham, 10 Sept. 1588, Cott. MS Calig., D.I., fo. 243; *CSP Scot.*, ix, pp. 612-3.

⁷³⁷ BL, William Asheby to Walsingham, 19 Sept. 1588, Cott. MS Calig., D.I., fo. 245; *CSP Scot.*, ix, p.

The same confusion was evident in the reports from the Spanish government. On 7 September, the Council of War was informed that the Armada was sailing around the British Islands; however, on 17 September, victory was proclaimed; and just one week later, Zuñiga lamented that the Armada had been defeated and the few ships that had been able to survive were returning in miserable condition.⁷³⁸ However, still at the end of September, Mendoza had assured Philip II that the rumours of the failure and destruction of the Great Armada were untrue. Mendoza claimed that he had been informed that a ship from St Andrews had seen the Armada between the Orkneys and the Shetlands.⁷³⁹ He had also been informed of the arrival of a Danish diplomat in Paris, who declared that he had seen on his trip the unsplintered Armada sailing between Orkney and Shetland. The Dane assured him that the men had caught great quantities of fish while passing through the Great Banks, which soon thereafter they had sold to the Scots for good sums of money. Nevertheless, this same diplomat had assured him that the Armada had also captured a large Dutch and English fishing fleet of nearly 300 ships. Mendoza wanted to believe in victory, and that had blinded him, but finally by the beginning of October, he had to recognise that the Armada had failed and was returning defeated to Spain.⁷⁴⁰

Meanwhile, the Armada was indeed returning to Spain passing between the Orkneys and the Shetlands, where it suffered bad weather.⁷⁴¹ In these dangerous seas and powerful storms, more than 15,000 men were killed by the cold, hunger and other miseries.⁷⁴²

The English had already been able to arrest the first survivors of the scattered Spanish ships wrecked on the coasts of their realm by mid-September. One of the first was John Antonio de Monoma, son of Francisco de Monoma, the Italian pilot of the *Santa Maria de la Rosa*, arrested in Bleskey. During his inquisition, on 11 September, he confessed that 'he remembereth that two ships were sonke upon the coast of Scotland,

616.

⁷³⁸ M.J. Rodríguez-Salgado, 'Felipe II y la Crisis Post Armada: política exterior y rebelión, 1588-1594,' in *Después de la Gran Armada: la historia desconocida (1588-16...)*, supplement to no. 20 (1993), pp. 8-10; see also BNM, 'Carta de Jeronimo Burges a don Miguel de Almazar con noticias llegadas a la corte de la Armada,' MS 1761, fo. 384.

⁷³⁹ *CSP Span.*, iv, pp. 405, 425.

⁷⁴⁰ De Lamar, *Diplomacy and Dogmatism*, pp. 158-9.

⁷⁴¹ *CODOIN*, lxxxi, p. 206.

⁷⁴² *ibid.*, lxxxi, p. 209.

by reason of shottes received from the English ships, the one called S. Matthew of five hundred tonnes, the other ship a Biskey of San Sebastian of foure hundred tonnes.’⁷⁴³

In fact, at least three ships were driven to the Scottish coast to find victuals and shelter, finally entering the Sound of Mull. One wrecked near Lochaline, the second off the coast of Salen and the third, the great galleon *San Juan de Sicilia*, in Tobermory Bay.⁷⁴⁴

The ship known as the ‘Tobermory Galleon,’ was the first of the ships wrecked on the Scottish coast. The ship passed through the inner side of the Outer Hebrides, turning up at Islay on 13 September, and then passing near the Isle of Mull. Once there, she anchored in Tobermory Bay.⁷⁴⁵ Traditionally, it was identified in the seventeenth century as the galleon *El Duque de Florencia*, part of the ‘Armada of Portugal.’ However, serious research proved that the ship wrecked in Tobermory Bay was the galleon *San Juan de Sicilia*, of the Levant squadron, and commanded by don Diego Tellez Enriquez.⁷⁴⁶

However, there was always mystery surrounding the Tobermory galleon, and it was not only its name. In the local tradition it was known as the ‘Armada treasure-ship,’ claimed to have carried gold and silver from the ‘Plate Fleet’ returning yearly from the Indies, the amazing cipher of ‘30,000,000 money;’⁷⁴⁷ that her captain was a *grandee* of Spain, who used dishes and goblets of gold; and that a Spanish princess accompanied him, who carried a chest and cases full of jewels and precious stones.⁷⁴⁸

⁷⁴³ *Certaine Advertisements out of Ireland, concerning the losses and distresses happened to the Spanish nauie, vpon the VWest coastes of Ireland, in their voyage intended from the Northerne Isles beyond Scotland towards Spaine. Bodleian Library, Oxford* (London, 1588); see also CODOIN, lxxxi, p. 221.

⁷⁴⁴ M. Lewis, *The Spanish Armada* (London, 1960), pp. 288-92.

⁷⁴⁵ *ibid.*, pp. 203-4.

⁷⁴⁶ See J. Corbett, ‘Spanish Reports and the Wreck at Tobermory,’ *SHR*, viii (1911), pp. 400-4; A. Lang, ‘The Mystery of the Tobermory Galleon Revealed,’ *Blackwoods Magazine*, cxcii (1912), pp. 22-36; M. Lewis, *The Spanish Armada* (London, 1960), pp. 292-3; Martin & Parker, *The Spanish Armada*, pp. 223-4.

⁷⁴⁷ McLeay has compiled an account of the Spanish galleon lost in Tobermory Bay, supposedly with over 30 million pounds of gold on board and the attempts to recover the treasure over the past 400 years. A. McLeay, *The Tobermory Treasure. The true story of a fabulous Armada galleon* (London, 1986), p. 192.

⁷⁴⁸ Lewis, *The Spanish Armada*, pp. 292-3.

It is probable that there was some money and jewellery in the ship,⁷⁴⁹ but this could never reach the 30,000,000 any type of Spanish coin.⁷⁵⁰

Another legend said that the galleon was wrecked deliberately by the Tobermory men.⁷⁵¹ Probably this came from the contemporary reports of the English agents themselves. They wrote: 'the Spanish ship I mentioned, which was driven on the Isle of Mull in Maclane's country, is burnt by treachery of the Irish.'⁷⁵² In fact, the ship was burnt, but the one accused was a man called John Smollett. Smollett was a merchant from Dumbarton, who traded with the western islands, and sometimes acted as an agent of Walsingham.⁷⁵³ He had been able to penetrate the ship and 'cast in the powder-room a piece of lint, and so departed. Within a short time after, the lint took fire.' Nearly all the crew of the ship died, including the commander. Only few men survived.⁷⁵⁴

On 23 August, the *Gran Grifon*, the flagship of the squadron of *urcas* commanded by Juan Lopez de Medina,⁷⁵⁵ was separated from the Armada, and by 1 September was in front of the Irish coast, and by the 7 September, was probably in the latitude of Galway Bay.⁷⁵⁶ Because there was no imminent danger of shipwreck, she sailed north-east, until she reached the Outer Hebrides. She passed inside them, until she hit Fair Island.⁷⁵⁷ On the island, her 300 men crew received, or took, a little food.⁷⁵⁸ They only lived in Fair Island for six or seven weeks,⁷⁵⁹ because the island could not offer

⁷⁴⁹ The Spanish documents affirmed that some money had been carried in the ships to be presented to the English nobles. See for example, 'Noticias de la Invencible.' *CODOIN*, lxxxi, p. 231.

⁷⁵⁰ Lewis, *The Spanish Armada*, pp. 203-4; in the archaeological excavations carried out in the wrecked ship more money has been expended than has been found. *ibid.*, pp. 293-4.

⁷⁵¹ For the local traditions, the story of the treasure-seeking, the discussion as to the identity of the galleon, and the documents relating to her destruction see Lang, 'The Mystery of the Tobermory Galleon Revealed,' pp. 422-36.

⁷⁵² *CSP Scot.*, ix, p. 635.

⁷⁵³ Lewis, *The Spanish Armada*, p. 294.

⁷⁵⁴ *ibid.*, p. 204.

⁷⁵⁵ The legend of the Spanish Armada held in the north of Scotland claims that the wreck of Fair Island was the flagship commanded by the duke of Medina Sidonia, the commander-in-chief of the Spanish Armada. The confusion seems to come from similarity of the surnames of Juan Lopez de Medina and the duke of Medina Sidonia. J.R. Hale, *The Story of the Great Armada* (London, 1913), p. 290.

⁷⁵⁶ Hardy, *Survivors of the Armada*, p. 53.

⁷⁵⁷ Martin & Parker, *The Spanish Armada*, p. 214; this Spanish Armada wreck was described later by travellers. See E.D. Clarke, *The Life and Remains of the Rev. Edward Daniel Clarke* (London, 1824), p. 226; see also W. Sacheverell, *An Account of the Isle of Man* (Manx Society, 1859), p. 127.

⁷⁵⁸ Lewis, *The Spanish Armada*, pp. 201-2; William Asheby informed Burghley that 500 Spaniards had arrived to Fair Island. *CSP Scot.*, ix, p. 635.

⁷⁵⁹ Hale, *The Story of the Great Armada*, p. 290.

enough provisions to support them for much longer. Suffering from hunger and cold, they decided to past to Anstruther, where Gomez de Medina surrendered himself and his men to the bailies of the town in a morning in the beginning of October.⁷⁶⁰

The bailies went immediately to see James Melville, the Presbyterian minister of Anstruther saying: 'I have news to tell you, sir; there is arrived in our harbour this morning a ship full of Spaniards, 260, but not to give mercy, but to ask it.' Melville and bailies went to the Town Hall, where the Council was going to meet with the commander of the Spaniards.⁷⁶¹ The minister described Medina as 'a very reverend man, of big stature and grave and stout countenance, gray haired, and very humble like,' who related for them the misadventures of his ship with the Armada.⁷⁶² In his diary, Melville commented that the commander and officers were hospitably entertained at the houses of the neighbouring gentry, and the soldiers received food by the burgesses of the town, until they were able to go to Edinburgh to try to get a ship to reach Spanish dominions.⁷⁶³

The first survivors of the Armada, twenty Spanish and sixteen Italian soldiers and mariners, arrived at Edinburgh on 10 October 1588. They were part of the crew of 500 soldiers and 79 mariners of the *La Ballanzara*, a great galleon of 1,200 tons, that had wrecked in the north of Ireland on 6 September. The rest of the crew were sick and had decided to stay in Ireland, where some Irish people relieved them with victuals. When they arrived at Ayr looking 'naiked, pure and desolatt,'⁷⁶⁴ the burgh granted £4 for meat and drink 'to the pure Spainyardis,' £1 to James Boyd, for four pairs of shoes that he had given to the Spaniards, and a final £10 for their lodging.⁷⁶⁵ By 13 October, the refugees from this wreck that had reached Edinburgh numbered 50, or 52 depending on the source, Spaniards and Italians.⁷⁶⁶ Captain Cuellar in a letter to Philip II, dated on 4 October 1589, explained that:

⁷⁶⁰ *ibid.*, p. 290.

⁷⁶¹ 'Memoirs of Rev. James Melville,' in J.G. Fyfe (ed.), *Scottish Diaries and Memoirs, 1550-1746* (Stirling, 1928), pp. 100-3; Martin & Parker, *The Spanish Armada*, p. 215.

⁷⁶² Hale, *The Story of the Great Armada*, p. 290.

⁷⁶³ Melville, *Diary*, pp. 260-3.

⁷⁶⁴ *Edin. Recs.*, iii, p. 531.

⁷⁶⁵ G. Pyde (ed.), *Ayr Burgh Accounts, 1534-1624* (SHS, 1937), p. 161.

⁷⁶⁶ William Asheby affirmed that, on 13 October, they were 50. BL, William Asheby to Walsingham, 13 Oct. 1588, Cott. MS Calig. D.I., fo. 226; *CSP Scot.*, ix, pp. 623, 628.

We were told that the King of Scotland would receive all the Spaniards that came to his kingdom, and would give them clothes and ships, so that they might go home to Spain. But everything was just the contrary, for he did not help any one, not did he give away a crown in alms, in spite of the great need among those who had come to his kingdom. We had gone to Scotland to seek safety and a way of getting to Spain, and we stayed there for more than six months without any means, in just that condition that we had come in from Ireland and other.⁷⁶⁷

The Spanish Captain assuring that James was totally surrendered to Elizabeth, commented that it was the Catholic lords and noblemen of the that realm, which had relieved them.⁷⁶⁸ He added:

these [Catholic] noblemen supported us all the time we were there, and gave us alms, freely, and were very kind to us, entertaining great pity for our tribulations, and asked us to have patience and be long suffering with the people that called us idolaters and bad Christians insulting things to us.⁷⁶⁹

However, the main benefactor was the town of Edinburgh, which offered them clothes and food.⁷⁷⁰ But, the English sources agreed that the Spaniards' conditions had not seemed to have improved much since they arrived to Edinburgh; they still were 'poor and miserable.'⁷⁷¹

By the end of October, another fourteen Spaniards had arrived at Edinburgh to join the ones left behind.⁷⁷² 'Fynding that thair is new cum to this burgh ane greitt number of schopbrokkin Spayngyerts in maist meserabill estaitt, bayth naiket and famishet, thinks expedient that ane new collectioun be maid for thair support throw the haill toun.'⁷⁷³

Alexander Hunter and William Rig, two merchants of the town of Edinburgh, were applying to obtain letters for transporting the Spaniards back to the Spanish Netherlands or Spain.⁷⁷⁴ However, by the end of the month of October, this first group

⁷⁶⁷ *A Letter Written on October 4, 1589 by Captain Cuellar of the Spanish Armada to His Majesty King Philip II, recounting his misadventures in Ireland and elsewhere after the wreck of his ship. From the city of Antwerp* (New York, 1895), pp. 100-1.

⁷⁶⁸ *ibid.*, p. 102; see also Ker, 'The Spanish Story of the Armada,' pp. 173-4.

⁷⁶⁹ *A Letter Written on October 4, 1589 by Captain Cuellar*, p. 103

⁷⁷⁰ BL, William Asheby to Walsingham, 6 Nov. 1588, Cott. MS Calig. D.I., fo. 230; *CSP Scot.*, ix, p. 628.

⁷⁷¹ BL, William Asheby to Walsingham, 13 Oct. 1588, Cott. MS Calig. D.I., fo. 226; *CSP Scot.*, ix, p. 623.

⁷⁷² 30 Oct. 1588. *Edin. Recs.*, iii, p. 532.

⁷⁷³ 1 Nov. 1588. *ibid.*, iii, p. 532.

⁷⁷⁴ 23 Oct. 1588. *ibid.*, iii, p. 531.

of Spaniards departed in the ship – the *Mary Grace* – of the merchant from Leith Andrew Lamb, and in another ship called the *Grace of God*, whose destination was France.⁷⁷⁵ The Spanish official documents recorded that ‘de Escocia han venido 45 soldados que quedaron de la armada que fue contra Inglaterra: dicen se les ha hecho muy buen tratamiento.’⁷⁷⁶

On 24 November, eighteen Spaniards arrived from the ship burnt on the Isle of Mull.⁷⁷⁷ Only two days later, 200 more Spaniards, from the wreck in Fair Isle, landed at Anstruther in Fife. They came in fisher-boats, meaning to hire a couple of ships to take them into the Low Countries. William Asheby declared: ‘they saved their treasure and are come hither unspoiled.’⁷⁷⁸ By 13 December, the Spaniards amounted to 300, including Juan de Modena – nephew of the duke of Modena. And again, Roger Aston reported that ‘it is thought they are very rich,’ and ‘men of good.’ Rich or not, the heavy increase in the already high numbers of Spaniards was provoking great fear in the Protestant ministers, who had begun to speak plainly in the pulpit about them.⁷⁷⁹

By 29 December, the main body of Spaniards had already arrived at Edinburgh, amounting to a surprising total of 400 men. Once in the town, their captains were received by King James, who had given direction to the provost of Edinburgh to maintain the Spaniards.⁷⁸⁰ In a later source, it was recorded that:

Thomas Fyscheare, baillie, has deburset the some of four scoir fyftein pounds and schilling sex pennis upoun the sustentation, clothing, and despasching forth of the country of the poor Spayngyarts that arrived amongs the first within this burgh and were supported upoun the towns charges, and this by and attoure the summs collected ye contribution of the neighbourghs.⁷⁸¹

⁷⁷⁵ Mowat, *The Port of Leith*, p. 142; BL, William Asheby to Walsingham, 6 Nov. 1588, Cott. MS Calig. D.I., fo. 230; *CSP Scot.*, ix, p. 628.

⁷⁷⁶ ‘45 soldiers from the Armada that went against England have returned from Scotland [to Spain]: they say that they had been very well treated.’ *CODOIN*, lxxxix, p. 237.

⁷⁷⁷ BL, William Asheby to Walsingham, 26 Nov. 1588, Cott. MS Calig. D.I., fo. 228; *CSP Scot.*, ix, p. 638.

⁷⁷⁸ *ibid.*, ix, pp. 640-1.

⁷⁷⁹ *ibid.*, ix, p. 647; a report on the dangers from an English agent to the King of Scotland dated 14 Dec. 1588, is recorded in BL, ‘Original autograph letters,’ Add. MS 12,507, fo. 194.

⁷⁸⁰ BL, Sir Henry Widdrington to Walsingham, 29 Dec. 1588, Cott. MS Calig., D.I., fo. 238; *CSP Scot.*, ix, p. 655.

⁷⁸¹ Entry for 18 Apr. 1589. *Edin. Recs.*, iv, p. 542.

Obviously, the English faction in Scotland and the English government itself wanted to have the Spaniards transported out of the realm as soon as possible, and Bothwell offered to send his servant Captain Hackerston to Spain transporting the nearly 400 soldiers, captains and officers still in Scotland from the wrecks of the Armada.⁷⁸² However, the main problem was that he obviously would need to obtain a warrant from James to treat with Philip and Parma.⁷⁸³

Bothwell was accommodating some of the captains of the wrecked Armada in his house. The reason seemed to be 'to ensure receiving money for their return' from Parma, and not any type of treasonable dealing.⁷⁸⁴ However, James had reasons to be suspicious of Bothwell. It was said that, in early 1589, Juan de Modena had departed from the realm in a barque of Colonel Stewart with three or four captains and some servants to Spain with 'directions' from Huntly, Bothwell, Lord Seton and others to 'let the Spanish King know how many well willers he hath in this country, and to procure but 4000 Spaniards good shot and leaders, with a sum of money to be brought hither by his conduct with speed.'⁷⁸⁵

Another very prevalent rumour said that the remaining 1,100 or 1,200 Spaniards in Scotland were waiting the coming of others. Moreover, Colonel Stewart had claimed that the Spaniards would try a new armada that same summer of 1589.⁷⁸⁶ On 26 February, the master of Gray gave a speech 'to warn the Scotch against the practices and intrigues of the King of Spain.'⁷⁸⁷ The news of Philip repairing the losses to his fleet and raising new troops in Italy and elsewhere to try to avenge his honour in this summer of 1589 crossed Europe.⁷⁸⁸

Once again, the problem of the Spanish Armada survivors arose: in case of a revolt of the 'Catholic lords' they could prove an immense danger. William Asheby assured

⁷⁸² *CSP Scot.*, ix, pp. 686-91; PRO, 'King of Spain's forces in the Low Countries,' 1590, SP 77/5, fo. 1; SCA, 'Relación de los servicios que los Escoceses han hecho a la corona de España de cien años a esta parte y de lo que por ella han padecido en cuatro eras de tiempo,' CA4/5/11.

⁷⁸³ *CSP Scot.*, ix, pp. 691-2.

⁷⁸⁴ *ibid.*, ix, pp. 670, 680-2; Macpherson, 'Francis Stewart, 5th Earl Bothwell,' p. 168.

⁷⁸⁵ *CSP Scot.*, ix, pp. 680-1.

⁷⁸⁶ *ibid.*, ix, p. 681.

⁷⁸⁷ 'A Short Discourse, wherein is sett downe the very trueth of the Kinge of Spaine, his designe against this whole Isle, by the Master of Gray,' in CUL, 'A Collection of State Papers of the Reigns of Mary and Elizabeth Illustrating the Spanish War,' Gg.v.36, fos. 194-211.

that, having talked several times with James VI about the Spaniards, he found James ‘willing to have them embarked and sent away.’ Adding:

The King hath commanded that order should be taken to purge the country of them, and ministers urge it daily, but it will hardly be brought to pass except her majesty be at the charges; such is the poverty of this prince and country.⁷⁸⁹

Asheby was of the opinion that some of the captains of the Spanish Armada should stay, but all the others should go⁷⁹⁰ because of James’s ‘youth years and wild nature;’ claiming that he could be abused by the Catholics and malcontents, especially George Gordon, Huntly, if he was not strengthened by Elizabeth.⁷⁹¹

Thomas Fowler declared that he did not doubt that James would rule well as long as no foreign forces arrived in the realm, however, he doubted it would be different if there came a few thousand Spaniards and pistols, because ‘this well-affected King would have no power to reject persuasions to [join?] with them.’⁷⁹²

Still, no Spaniards had been transported since don Juan de Modena left Scotland. Luckily, at the beginning of June, a Scotsman arrived at Edinburgh from Flanders with a letter from Parma ‘requesting the Spaniardes that be in this countrie to be transported of his charge.’ Parma had offered to pay five crowns for each Spaniard who arrived at Flanders. Obviously, James was willing to have them gone, however, he had declared that no man will be transported without Elizabeth’s safe-conduct. Thus, William Asheby reported that William Napier, a burghess of Edinburgh, had offered to transport them to Spain or Flanders, as Elizabeth would direct.⁷⁹³ This prosperous merchant requested a licence to be granted to him to deal with Parma for the refunding of his money once he had transported the Spaniards to the Spanish Netherlands,⁷⁹⁴ however, once again their transportation became complicated.

⁷⁸⁸ *CSP Ven.*, viii, pp. 405-7.

⁷⁸⁹ *CSP Scot.*, ix, p. 705-8; 601; *ibid.*, ix, pp. 706-7.

⁷⁹⁰ *ibid.*, ix, p. 709.

⁷⁹¹ *ibid.*, x, p. 14.

⁷⁹² BL, Thomas Fowler to Walsingham, 26 Mar. 1589, Cott. MS Calig. D.I., fo. 418; *CSP Scot.*, x, p. 16.

⁷⁹³ *ibid.*, x, p. 105; Duro, *Armada*, i, p. 121.

⁷⁹⁴ *CSP Scot.*, x, p. 107.

On 5 June, three English trumpeters, from a ship called the 'Vantgard' shored at Leith, were drinking with some Scots when one was murdered with a dagger. The suspects were three or four Spaniards. Not being able to capture them, the Spanish captains were committed prisoners to the town house.⁷⁹⁵ James was decided upon seeing justice done, but still on 20 June they had not been able to accuse anyone with the murder of the English trumpeter.⁷⁹⁶

Once again, Thomas Fowler raised the alarm on 24 June, claiming that the Catholics on the Isle expected 6,000 Spaniards and money to pay 12,000 soldiers by Parma. However, he already knew that Parma would only give half the asked sum.⁷⁹⁷ It was obvious that the Spaniards had to be finally transported out of the realm for the danger they represented. Thus, by the beginning of July, Thomas Fowler had received the safe-conduct signed by Elizabeth and a letter from the Council for the transportation of the Spaniards to Flanders. The safe-conduct was to be granted to any Scotsman who would venture to pass from the north of Scotland into Spain.⁷⁹⁸ However, Thomas Fowler was of the opinion that some of the captains of the Spaniards should stay in Scotland. They were going to be used as pledge for the son of a Leith merchant called Lamb and some other Scotsmen who had their ships and goods seized by the *Santa Inquisición* in Spain.⁷⁹⁹

Finally on 14 July, four ships were ready to transport the Spaniards, who were dispersed through Edinburgh, Leith, Burntisland and Kirkcaldy, numbering 600, however, some of the captains would have to stay to give satisfaction for the murder of the English trumpeter and the seizures by the Spanish Inquisition of Scottish ships and goods.⁸⁰⁰ Five hundred Spaniards had died since their arrival in the realm.⁸⁰¹

Two of the Spanish captains, Patricio and Gorotto, gathered their companies. By 22 July, 660 men were ready to be shipped – 400 serviceable men, 260 sick, lame and

⁷⁹⁵ BL, William Asheby to Burghley, 13 June 1589, Cott. MS Calig. D.I., fo. 374; *SCP Scot.*, x, p. 98.

⁷⁹⁶ *ibid.*, x, p. 108.

⁷⁹⁷ *ibid.*, x, p. 110.

⁷⁹⁸ BL, Thomas Fowler to Burghley, 22 July 1589, Cott. MS Jul. F vi, fo. 104; *CSP Scot.*, x, p. 118.

⁷⁹⁹ *ibid.*, x, p. 119.

⁸⁰⁰ BL, Thomas Fowler to Burghley, 22 July 1589, Cott. MS Jul. F vi, fo. 104; *CSP Scot.*, x, p. 118; see also A. Yagui-Beltran & L. Adam, 'The Imprisonment of David Kinloch, 1588-1594, an analysis of newly discovered documents in the archives of the Spanish Inquisition,' *IR*, liii (2002), pp. 1-39.

⁸⁰¹ BL, 'Correspondence and papers of the English ambassador,' Eg. MS 2,598, fo. 156.

miserable. Those that murdered the English trumpeter had not yet been apprehended. Thus, the Chancellor had commanded that two or three Spanish captains stay for satisfaction. Their transportation was committed to William Napier and George Thrubrand, both merchants from Edinburgh, who had conducted four ships, at the time ready in the Forth and waiting for good wind, to transport them to Flanders.⁸⁰²

The Spaniards embarked at Leith and Burntisland departed on 25 July towards the Low Countries. Some few decided to stay working in noblemen's houses. For the satisfaction of the trumpeter's death, the two Spanish captains – Patricio and Gorotto – left a Spaniard in custody of the provost of Edinburgh.⁸⁰³ However, in the following days more Spaniards kept arriving at Edinburgh trying to be transported. By the end of the month, three or four Spaniards from the wreck in the Isle of Mull and who had been entertained by the MacLeans, arrived at Edinburgh seeking to pass into Flanders. Nevertheless, the other Spaniards had already departed, so they had to wait for the next opportunity.⁸⁰⁴

Asheby was still reporting on 11 November that there were 60 Spaniards waiting to be transported in three ships to Spain,⁸⁰⁵ and only a week later, the number of Spaniards had reached 100.⁸⁰⁶ Finally, at the beginning of December, a French merchant from Calais was granted the transportation of the last Spaniards. He intended to send them as soon as possible in four barques with Scottish pilots, travelling around the Orkneys then along the coast of England to Spain.⁸⁰⁷ However, the Spanish sources recorded that at the end of the year 1589, the final 700 survivors were transported to Flanders by Scots, of which 300 were killed by the English in Zealand.⁸⁰⁸

By the beginning of the twentieth century, there had not been many new discoveries about the Spanish Armada. In 1958, Walter Deas and his group of divers found a wrecked ship in the Scottish coasts. They thought that the ship was the *Santa*

⁸⁰² *CSP Scot.*, x, p. 122; Mowat, *The Port of Leith*, p. 143.

⁸⁰³ *CSP Scot.*, x, p. 122.

⁸⁰⁴ *ibid.*, x, p. 127.

⁸⁰⁵ BL, 'Correspondence and papers of the English ambassador,' Eg. MS 2,598, fo. 157.

⁸⁰⁶ *ibid.*, fo. 161.

⁸⁰⁷ *ibid.*, fo. 201; *CSP Scot.*, x, pp. 211-2.

⁸⁰⁸ 'Noticias de la Invencible.' *CODOIN*, lxxxi, p. 257.

Caterina, however, it was finally uncovered to be a Dutch merchant ship.⁸⁰⁹ In fact, the legends of the Armada's (fictional) treasure have attracted treasure hunters for over four hundred years. As soon as 1594, Robert Logan of Restalrig – master of Fast Castle – started his searches for the supposed gold hidden in or near Fast Castle.⁸¹⁰

In 2001, another possible Spanish galleon was located off Kinlochbervie, in north-west Sutherland by the RAF. The RAF, Channel 4's Time Team and St. Andrews University's Archaeological Diving Unit (ADU) are still excavating the wreck. The ship has even been named thanks to the collaboration of Felipe Fernández-Armesto as the *San Gabriel*.⁸¹¹

They have found pottery that includes Spanish cannons, anchors and pottery made in southern Spain and high grade Italian majolica. Both wares, which dated to the later sixteenth century, had been examined by specialist Celia Cernow who identified much of it as a type of decorative tableware made in the later part of the sixteenth century in the workshops of the Patanazzi families in Urbino, Italy. The more spectacular pieces discovered include an almost complete ewer decorated with female satyrs and a 'salt' that would have been a centrepiece of a dinner table. The raised material is now being conserved by the National Museums of Scotland. However, the fact that no similar objects had been recovered from known Armada wrecks, makes it probable that the ship wrecked was not an Armada ship.⁸¹²

In a *Historie of Scotland, since the death of King James the first until the death of King James the sixth* kept in the NLS there is a very revealing document: 'The failure of the Armada. How the king of Spaine tooke it.'

The Spanish King himself bare the overgrow paciently as receaved from God, and gave and commanded to be given all over Spaine, thanks to God, and the Saintes and used singulare pittie in reetening the distressed souldiors and saylers...After yt expedition of the Spanyards againsest England had proved so adberse, dishonorable, and fully frustrate, they to repaire there glory, and dibert the cogitationes of the English from fixing upon an invasion of the countries of the King of Spaine renewed there former designe of infested England by the way of Scotland. In this businesse they espeiallie employed Mr Robert Bruce preist, Crichton's and Hay bothe Jesuits, who safilie drew to there party the Earles of Huntly, Erroll, Crawford, men

⁸⁰⁹ W. Deas, 'Treasure Group Seeks Armada Wreck,' *Skin Diver Magazine*, vii (1958), pp. 12-3.

⁸¹⁰ W. Deas, 'The Fast Castle Treasure,' *Scots Link*, xlv (1996), p. 9.

⁸¹¹ For his earlier works see F. Fernandez-Armestos, *The Spanish Armada* (Oxford, 1989).

⁸¹² C. Martin, 'Guns of the Armada,' *British Archaeology*, liv (2002), p. 15.

most deboted to the popist religion and Bothwell the sonne of them Prior of Coldingham the naturall (so called) of base soone of King James the 5.⁸¹³

In deed, the Catholic writers did not try to defend the catastrophe, and the Protestant literature was full of eulogies to their victory.⁸¹⁴ A very important example of this is the ‘poeme made by King James the 6 in commemoration of the liberance from the Spanish Armada. 1588’ in *The Historie of Scotland*.⁸¹⁵

The nations banded against the Lord of myt
prepared a force, and set them to the way
Mars drest him selfe in such an anfull plight
the lyke whereof was neber seene they say.
They forward came in monsterous array
Both sea, and land, be set as every where
Braggs treatned as aunyous decay
what came of that? the theif did declare
the winds beggan to tosse them heir and there
the seas begane in fuming waves to swell
the number yt escaped it fell them fair
The rest were swallowed up in gulfes of hele
But to him hen were all these things miraculous done
God lookey at them out of his heavenly throone

Liberation and victory, or failure and natural catastrophe, the Protestants had learned that Spain could muster its resources again for a new expedition.⁸¹⁶ Philip II, had he wanted to counter the rising power of England, would also have had to send a second expedition, and would have had to secure strong support from within the realm

The Apotheosis of the Scottish Nobility’s Relations with Spain

James VI refused Philip II’s offers, or requests, presented by Sempill and ordered his arrest.⁸¹⁷ Sempill had left the Firth of Forth to speak with a Spanish pinnace, and on his return he was arrested.⁸¹⁸ Parma, without any scruple, did not hesitate to leave the agent without any support because it was politic to do so, despite their long

⁸¹³ NLS, ‘Historie of Scotland, since the death of King James the first until the death of King James the sixth,’ ADV MS 35.5.3, fo. 237.

⁸¹⁴ Clancy, *Papist Pamphleteers*, p. 74.

⁸¹⁵ NLS, ‘Historie of Scotland, since the death of King James the first until the death of King James the sixth,’ ADV MS 35.5.3, fo. 235; see also James VI of Scotland, *The Poems of James VI of Scotland, 1566-1625*, 3rd series (STS, 1955-1958), p. 34.

⁸¹⁶ Grant, ‘The Brig o’ Dee Affair,’ in Goodare & Lynch, *The Reign of James VI*, p. 101.

⁸¹⁷ Fernández de Navarrete wrote that the King of Scotland ordered Sempill’s arrest ‘to behead him.’ Fernández de Navarrete, *Biblioteca Marítima Española*, i, p. 608.

relation.⁸¹⁹ Parma sent two letters to Scotland, one to James concerning Sempill and his behaviour in Scotland, alleging ‘he dealt further than he had commission.’ The second letter was addressed to Bothwell, with ‘offers of great entertainment if he will come there and serve.’⁸²⁰

While James refused any Spanish offer,⁸²¹ Bothwell was said to have shipped ‘under pretence to conquer one of the west isles called Lewis, and pays his men with Spanish money.’⁸²² One of his servants, the pirate Hackerston, had departed towards the west, in command of a group 600 mariners and soldiers. However, after a week of intense espionage, English agents informed that Bothwell was not being paid in Spanish money. Hackerston and his men reconsidered their objectives and began a campaign of piracy against the Scottish coast.⁸²³ As a matter of fact, James knew of the contacts between Bothwell and Parma, but decided to let them continue.⁸²⁴

While the English espionage focussed its investigations on Bothwell, and James was with his councillors considering his marriage to the princess of Navarre, William Sempill made two escapes from this imprisonment, which were vividly narrated by Father Forbes-Leith.⁸²⁵ Unfortunately, his first escape, aided by the earl of Huntly, was unsuccessful. The second succeeded combining the aid of the earl of Huntly; Lady Ross, daughter of Lord Sempill; Robert Bruce, who had already met in Spain years before; and 400 crowns. Sempill was able to escape through the window of the prison where Carmichael was guarding him.⁸²⁶ On 20 August, the Privy Council of Scotland published an order against William Sempill, ‘who had come on a pretended

⁸¹⁸ *CSP Span.*, iv, pp. 405, 425.

⁸¹⁹ Notice that after this affair was past, Parma recommended Philip to award the William Sempill with the habit of the Order of Santiago for his merits in Scottish affairs. Fernández de Navarrete, *Biblioteca Marítima Española*, i, p. 609.

⁸²⁰ *CSP Scot.*, ix, p. 653.

⁸²¹ *ibid*, ix, p. 656; Bothwell’s alliances always lacked of consistency; he was Protestant by education, but he went into temporary collaborations with the Roman Catholics. At the time of the Bridge of Dee, Bothwell would try to levy the Borderers against James VI. Nevertheless, it was not recorded any contact between Bothwell and Parma after Bothwell went back to Scotland few months later. SCA, ‘Letters of the duke of Parma and to James VI, King of Scotland, touching the commission of the Colonel Semple,’ CA4/9/12; see also BNM, Colonel W. Sempill, ‘Carlos V, Felipe II y Felipe III,’ MS H. 50, fo. 474.

⁸²² *CSP Scot.*, ix, p. 602.

⁸²³ Macpherson, ‘Robert Stewart, 5th Earl Bothwell,’ p. 167.

⁸²⁴ *CSP Scot.*, ix, pp. 705-6, 707-8; Macpherson, ‘Robert Stewart, 5th Earl Bothwell,’ p. 169.

⁸²⁵ Forbes-Leith, *Narratives*, p. 368.

⁸²⁶ Fernández de Navarrete wrote that the King of Scotland ordered Sempill’s arrest ‘to behead him.’ Fernández de Navarrete, *Biblioteca Marítima Española*, i, p. 608; Forbes-Leith, *Narratives*, p. 368.

mission from the Prince of Parma and had been trafficking treasonably with His Majesty's subjects.'⁸²⁷

However, Sempill was able to avoid his persecutors, and just before departing from Scotland, the Colonel met part of the Catholic nobility, particularly Lord Hamilton and the earls of Huntly and Errol – at this time, Constable of Scotland – arranging the correspondence. David Graham of Fintry and Robert Bruce would continue as the intermediaries for the intelligence between Spain and the Scottish Catholic nobility. In the same interview, it was also agreed that letters signed by the Catholic nobles would be substituted by ciphered letters, with a code that was designed by Sempill before he left Scotland, and that only in grave occasions, Graham of Fintry or Robert Bruce would go in person to Spain or the Low Countries with a letter of reference.⁸²⁸ Moreover, he carried with him a letter of Huntly to Parma, dated 12 September. Desperately, Huntly requested an immediate invasion.⁸²⁹

Sempill, in a letter to Philip III on Scottish affairs, in the early seventeenth century commented that:

El mal suceso de la armada no solo enpedio el venir la segunda orden sino el rey Jacobo vindose libre de la armada de españa prendiome y escapado por una ventana de la prision vuelto a Flanders a donde volvia entregar la letra de 500 escudos al duque de Parma.⁸³⁰

But later in his life, in a letter on Scottish affairs to the conde-duque of Olivares, dated 28 September 1627, Colonel Sempill wrote concerning the 500 crowns that had been given to him for his mission:

Que las mudanzas que hubo despues, fue causa que volvi al Duque de Parma el dinero de aquel credito excepto 100 escudos que gaste de los en solventar en Irlanda a Onel y Odonel que ahora se intitula condes de Jenon y Jenconel y los Macdoneles de las Islas Hebridas de Escocia contra Inglaterra.⁸³¹

⁸²⁷ DNB, p. 1177.

⁸²⁸ SCA, 'Clase de papeles del Coronel Sempill,' 15 Oct. 1620, CA4/3/13.

⁸²⁹ Brown, 'The Making of a *Politique*,' p. 168.

⁸³⁰ 'The bad event of the Armada, not only impeded the coming of the second order, but that King James being free of the Armada of Spain, arrested me and escaping through a window of the prison, I returned to Flanders, where I returned the letter of 500 *escudos* [500 crowns] to the duke of Parma.' SCA, 'Razones por saver si escosia es deseando al Rey d'Espana,' CA4/9/10.

⁸³¹ 'That the changes that came later were the cause that I returned to the duke of Parma the money of that credit except the 100 crowns that I spent in helping in Ireland to Onel [Tyrone, Hugh O'Neill, earl of] and Odonel [Tyrconnell, Rory O'Donnell, earl of] that now entitle themselves earls of Jenon and Jenconel [Tyrone and Tyrconnell] and the Macdonels of the Hebridean Isles of Scotland against

And once more in another letter from his later years he affirmed that this was not the only money that Colonel Sempill had given to his collaborators:

En poder destos dos quedaron 100 de los dichos 120 escudos por que los otros 20 hice dar a personas con quien granjease al conde Botzuel, almirante de Escocia, primo hermano de aquel rey.⁸³²

Immediately after his arrival at Flanders, Sempill made contact with Parma and delivered Huntly's letter. He wanted to make sure that if James decided to arrest the Catholic nobility the same amount of money as sent years before by Mendoza and the duke of Alba to keep them restrained until they were advised (4,000 crowns), would be sent to Scotland.⁸³³ But the total cost of the Armada had reached ten million crowns, and not even the continuous increase in taxes were sufficient to finance Philip II's imperialism.⁸³⁴ It was obvious that Philip could not provide the money, and the count of Olivares was unsuccessful in persuading the Pope to donate the million crowns he had promised before the Armada.⁸³⁵ Moreover, Parma confessed to Mendoza, in a letter dated 4 October, that he was going to write to the earl of Huntly that there was no money left because of the huge costs of the Armada to support any rebellion in the country.⁸³⁶

In November 1588, Robert Bruce wrote to Parma that 'His Catholic Majesty [Philip II] and his successors have now the best opportunity that has ever presented itself of making themselves rulers of this island, if it be not neglected.'⁸³⁷ Obviously, Bruce was referring to the advantage of having Spanish soldiers on the Isle. Also, George Gordon, Huntly, and Sempill had written to Parma in September and November 1588

England.' SCA, Colonel W. Sempill to the conde-duque of Olivares, 28 Sept. 1627, CA4/4/20; see also BNM, Colonel W. Sempill, 'Carlos V, Felipe II y Felipe III,' MS H. 50, fo. 474.

⁸³² 'in power of these two [Hugh O'neil and Rory O'Donnell] remained the 100 of the said 120 crowns, because I gave the other 20 to people [the Laird of Fintry and Robert Bruce] with whom I gained the collaboration of the earl of Bothwell, Admiral of Scotland, cousin of that King.' SCA, 'Clase de papeles del Coronel Sempill, 15 Oct. 1620,' CA4/3/13.

⁸³³ SCA, 'Clase de papeles del Coronel Sempill,' 15 Oct. 1620, CA4/3/13.

⁸³⁴ Apart from the cost of the Armada the Spanish government was spending over two million crowns a year in the war in the Netherlands and, between 1585 and 1590, three million crowns were sent to support the French Catholic leaders. Parker, *Philip II*, p. 178.

⁸³⁵ See AGS, the count of Olivares to Philip II, 26 Sept. 1588, E Rome, Leg. 950.

⁸³⁶ *CSP Span.*, iv, pp. 455-6; Brown, 'The Making of a *Politique*,' p. 168.

⁸³⁷ *CSP Span.*, iii, p. 478.

asking for a Spanish invasion, indicating that now was the most propitious time to do it.⁸³⁸

Parma was not supportive of a second enterprise, but desired a reinforcement of his troops to end his unreliable situation in the Low Countries. The disaster of the Armada had given the rebels in the Netherlands the space they needed to re-organise themselves, and the English were increasing their involvement in the Spanish Netherlands. Thus, in November 1588, an offer was made to the Scottish colonels and captains 'to deliver to the duke of Parma such town and *'peces'* [?] as they have in charge, or an get in possession, and to resort with their companies to the duke of Parma to be by him recommended to the service of Guise.'⁸³⁹

On the other hand, Mendoza was in favour of a second Armada, taking advantage of already having around 2,000 Spaniards on the Isle. Mendoza had written to Philip II that Elizabeth would take advantage of this opportunity for an attack upon the Spanish King.⁸⁴⁰ He must have been thinking that the best defence was attack when he affirmed in his dispatch that he had seen a copy of a letter that captain Atkins had written to Elizabeth, claiming that: 'si vuelve V. Magestad a ambiar segunda Armada no haura remedio que les sea de provecho.'⁸⁴¹

Moreover, Persons, who had spent the year of 1588 writing with Allen their *Admonition to the People of England*,⁸⁴² decided to pass into Spain in a galleon of Pedro Paulo Vassallo, on 26 November 1588. His mission, given by Allen, was to inform Philip of 'particularities on the Armada and what it was being discussed about it in Rome.'⁸⁴³ However, more than this, maybe James's collaboration was going to be needed to convince Philip to take a second armada.

⁸³⁸ *CSP Scot.*, ix, pp. 682-97; *RPC Scot.*, iv, pp. 361, 821-2.

⁸³⁹ *CSP Scot.*, ix, p. 635.

⁸⁴⁰ *CSP Span.*, iii, p. 439; moreover, Duplessis Mornay, the French minister, had written to the ambassador in England, on 29 October 1588, that: 'It is important that the Queen keep her foot upon the neck of the Spaniard. If not and if she withdraws it we have not certainty of a similar success a second time.' Quoted by E.P. Cheyney, *A History of England. From the defeat of the Armada to the death of Elizabeth*, i (London, 1914), pp. 153-4.

⁸⁴¹ 'that if Your Majesty sends again a second Armada there will not be remedy that would be beneficial to them.' AGS, Mendoza to Philip II, Nov. 1588, E Leg. 1420, fo. 110.

⁸⁴² BL, 'An Admonition to the people of England' by Cardinal Allen transcribed by Rokewode, 1588, Add. MS 63,502.

⁸⁴³ 'The Father Robert Persons of the Company of Jesus and natural of England, has arrived here with

On 10 December, Walsingham was informed that Colonel Boyd, a Scottish mercenary in the service of Parma, had come to Scotland ‘with request for intelligence to be kept betwixt the King and the Prince.’⁸⁴⁴ Moreover, the report claimed the presence in the realm of the nephew of the bishop of Dunblane, a young priest called John Chisholm. He had arrived at Edinburgh from Flanders, with a letter of Parma, dated of 13 October. Chisholm immediately departed from Edinburgh to Dunfermline, seeking Huntly, to deliver the letter to the earl and 6,272 crowns and 3,700 pistols to Bruce from Spain.⁸⁴⁵ Moreover, Mr. George Hackett – one of Bothwell’s servants – was said to have departed to see Parma.⁸⁴⁶

The Protestants and Kirk in Scotland wanted a persecution of Catholics and ‘Spanish faction’ in the realm, and the ministers were suspicious of James himself for not acting against his ‘rebellious subjects.’ The situation became catastrophic when even William Asheby, who had assured just a month before that James truly aimed against the Spaniards,⁸⁴⁷ declared his fears that James would be dealing with the Catholics. A Spaniard was said to be at Dunfermline with the earl of Huntly, intending to have a conference with James. In addition, Sir Henry Widdrington affirmed in a dispatch to Walsingham that ‘they practise to turn the King [of Scotland] from her Majesty.’⁸⁴⁸ Moreover, Huntly had offered Parma that if soldiers were sent again to invade the Isle, he would raise a rebellion in the north of Scotland.⁸⁴⁹

On 23 December 1588, Guise and his brother, the Cardinal of Lorraine, were murdered by the orders of Henry III. When this news reached Spain, a meeting of the Council of State was rapidly assembled on 10 January to discuss the appropriate course of action to take. The first measure recommended by the Council was to put all

licence of his General and by order of Cardinal Alano [Doctor William Allen] to pass to Spain...I make him embark in the galleon of Pedro Paulo Vassallo...and will depart from here in six...Of the said Father, Your Majesty will learn many particularities of the Armada and what it is discussed about it in Rome.’ AGS, Doctor W. Allen, ‘Instrucciones,’ Nov. 1588, E Leg. 1420, fo. 110.

⁸⁴⁴ *CSP Scot.*, ix, p. 646; James Hundson had been informed of Boyd’s coming by Roger Aston, on 1 December 1588.

⁸⁴⁵ *ibid.*, ix, pp. 686-91

⁸⁴⁶ *ibid.*, ix, p. 646.

⁸⁴⁷ BL, William Asheby to Walsingham, 26 Nov. 1588, Cott. MS Calig., D.I., fo. 228; *CSP Scot.*, ix, p. 638.

⁸⁴⁸ BL, Sir Henry Widdrington to Walsingham, 29 Dec. 1588, Cott. MS Calig., D.I., fo. 238; *CSP Scot.*, ix, p. 655.

Spanish forces on the frontiers with France on high alert to deter any possible invasion. Philip did not want to risk a major war with France in the aftermath of the Armada, nor drive Henry into the hands of the Huguenots. Parma advised Philip to continue the covert aid to the Catholic League.⁸⁵⁰ During his life Guise had been one of the main advocates of the Scottish cause. Thus, when the news reached Scotland, it caused fear that, with Philip mobilising his troops against France, England would have less reason to court Scottish favour.⁸⁵¹ However, the English had many reasons to woo Scotland. In January 1589, Philip ordered the construction of twelve galleons and the fortification of many ports in northern Spain, which were designed to serve as a future base of operation against England.⁸⁵² As soon as the news reached Scotland, don Juan de Modena departed from Scotland in a barque of Colonel Stewart with three or four captains and some servants to Spain with 'directions' from Huntly, Bothwell, Lord Seton and others 'to let the Spanish King know how many well willers he hath in this country' for his armada.⁸⁵³

Thus, very conveniently, on 20 February, the Privy Council of Scotland sent to the English ambassador a collection of deciphered letters that had been seized from a Scottish man, suspected of trying to carry them to Parma and Philip. In addition, they wrote:

You may remembere to hys majesty that this suffrance of the Jesuittes, as Creighton and his complices, ar the rootes of thee conspiracyes, and the contynuanee of the number of the Spanyardes that have long remayned ther have surely corrupted very manny of his subjectes, and hath made them very bold to attempt these treasons; and therefor the sooner they be banished the country and committed to the seas the better it shall be.⁸⁵⁴

This man was Thomas Pringle – Sempill's servant – who interrogated by Walsingham, confessed that Sempill had sent him over from Flanders six weeks before.⁸⁵⁵ The letters were from Errol, Huntly, Crawford, Maxwell, Lord Claude Hamilton and Robert Bruce. The letters were directed to Parma, Philip and Sempill.⁸⁵⁶

⁸⁴⁹ BL, [] to James Hudson, 1588, Cott. MS Calig., D.I., fo. 270; *CSP Scot.*, ix, p. 66.

⁸⁵⁰ Tenace, S.E., 'The Spanish Intervention in Brittany and the Failure of Philip II's Bid for European Hegemony, 1589-1598' (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1997), pp. 39-41.

⁸⁵¹ *CSP Scot.*, ix, pp. 665-6; Macpherson, 'Robert Stewart, 5th Earl Bothwell,' p. 169.

⁸⁵² Tenace, 'The Spanish Intervention in Brittany,' p. 41.

⁸⁵³ *CSP Scot.*, ix, pp. 680-1.

⁸⁵⁴ *ibid.*, ix, pp. 682-3; *RPC Scot.*, iv, pp. 821-2.

⁸⁵⁵ SCA, 'Clase de papeles del Coronel Sempill,' 15 Oct. 1620, CA4/3/13.

⁸⁵⁶ *CSP Scot.*, ix, pp. 682-97; *RPC Scot.*, iv, pp. 361, 821-2; *CSP Span.*, iv, p. 43; PRO, 'Foreign papers: Flanders,' SP 77/5.

The first letter was a collective letter of the ‘Scottish Lords to the King of Spain,’ dated 14 January 1589, and written in French. Firstly, they regretted the failure of the Spanish Armada a year before. Thus, they solicited Philip to renew his invasion of the Isle by way of Scotland, assuring that with the aid of 6,000 Spanish soldiers and money, in six weeks after their arrival they should be well advanced inside England; and, very shortly, they would have completed the invasion of the Isle. Finally, they claimed that Sempill knew all the details about this plan.⁸⁵⁷

The second letter was a long dispatch from the agent and spy Robert Bruce to Parma, dated 24 January 1589. This letter shows how these nobles had had a long-term correspondence with Parma, to whom they were referred by Philip II for advice and direction. Thus, Bruce confirmed Parma’s delivery of 6,272 crowns and 3,700 pistols to him by Father Chisholm.⁸⁵⁸ However, since David Graham of Fintry was prisoner by James’s order in the town of Dundee, Bruce associated for the dispensation of the money with Crichton. Part of the money was given to Lord Livingston, and the rest was kept in Edinburgh to aid, if needed, the Catholics nobles. Bruce, claimed that ‘in case that necessity should not require any distribution, the said sum will be kept and reserved for better opportunities, or until the arrival of your forces in this island.’ Moreover, Bruce declared that Bothwell, although Protestant, was ‘extremely desirous to aid you against England,’ assuring that Bothwell had offered to leave his country in order to go to offer himself to Parma, and afterwards to Philip. Thus, he offered to transport the nearly 400 Spanish soldiers and mariners still in Scotland from the wrecks of the Armada.⁸⁵⁹ Obviously, he would need to obtain a warrant from James to treat with Philip and Parma, which would not be easy under these suspicions.⁸⁶⁰

The next letter was a response from Huntly to Parma’s letter sent with Father Chisholm, on 13 October 1588.⁸⁶¹ The following enclosure was a letter from Errol to

⁸⁵⁷ ‘Scottish Lords to the King of Spain.’ *CSP Scot.*, ix, pp. 684-5.

⁸⁵⁸ However, the Privy Council reported that ‘Bruce hath received divers sums of money [apart from his pension by the King of Spain of 40 crowns per month], and lately 10,000 crowns by Chishome, and looketh for more from the duke, to be distributed among the Catholic nobility or employed for some great enterprise in Scotland, with the assistance of the Spanish forces.’ See third enclosure. *CSP Scot.*, ix, pp. 686-91.

⁸⁵⁹ PRO, ‘King of Spain’s forces in the Low Countries,’ 1590, SP 77/5, fo. 1; *CSP Scot.*, ix, pp. 689-91.

⁸⁶⁰ *ibid.*, ix, pp. 691-2.

⁸⁶¹ PRO, ‘King of Spain’s forces in the Low Countries,’ 1590, SP 77/5, fo. 2; *CSP Scot.*, ix, pp. 692-3.

Parma too, asking him 'to assure him [Philip II] on my behalf that he has no servant in this land more devoted than I.'⁸⁶² The last two enclosures were directed to Sempill; the first letter by Chisholm⁸⁶³ and the second by Bruce acknowledging the money and weapons delivered by Chisholm from Parma.⁸⁶⁴

Elizabeth wrote immediately to James informing him of the treasonable correspondence with Spain of some of his subjects, Huntly and Morton, and Lord Claude Hamilton.⁸⁶⁵ The news reached Scotland on 21 February, and despite the Protestants persistently asking for a suppression of this faction, James's reaction has been described by Ruth Grant as 'decidedly mild' adding that 'perhaps he was already aware that the correspondence existed.'⁸⁶⁶ Thomas Fowler, an English agent in Scotland, had informed of James's flirtations with some of these pro-Spanish nobles. But an English agent, probably Fowler again, had assured that the Pope would not excommunicate James if the bishop of Dunblane would report that he could win him.⁸⁶⁷ However, on 5 March, James had dinner with Thomas Fowler, during which he told the English agent that, although he was many times tempted by the French and Spanish, he was never persuaded by them, and iterated his loyalty to the English cause.⁸⁶⁸

Huntly was imprisoned at Edinburgh Castle with free access to visit granted to his wife, servants and friends, and suspended in his position as the captain of the guard, but by the beginning of March, he had been released by royal order. The following day, the Privy Council, meeting at Holyrood house, proclaimed Errol a rebel and issued a summons for Graham of Fintry.⁸⁶⁹ On 13 March, James met with Bothwell, Huntly and Errol in a hunting. After the meeting, which lasted for one hour, the earls of Huntly and Errol went towards Dunfermline, and the King and his cousin returned to Edinburgh. Again, James VI's loyalty to the Protestant party was more than

⁸⁶² PRO, 'King of Spain's forces in the Low Countries,' 1590, SP 77/5, fo. 3; *CSP Scot.*, ix, p. 693.

⁸⁶³ PRO, 'King of Spain's forces in the Low Countries,' 1590, SP 77/5, fo. 4; *CSP Scot.*, ix, p. 694.

⁸⁶⁴ PRO, 'King of Spain's forces in the Low Countries,' 1590, SP 77/5, fos. 5-6b; *CSP Scot.*, ix, pp. 695-7.

⁸⁶⁵ *RPC Scot.*, iv, pp. 360, 820-1, 367; for this episode, its background and its aftermath see Grant, 'The Brig o'Dee Affair,' in Goodare & Lynch, *The Reign of James VI*, pp. 93-109.

⁸⁶⁶ Grant, 'The Brig o'Dee Affair,' in Goodare & Lynch, *The Reign of James VI*, p. 102.

⁸⁶⁷ *CSP Scot.*, ix, p. 698.

⁸⁶⁸ *ibid.*, ix, p. 705.

⁸⁶⁹ *RPC Scot.*, iv, pp. 360, 820-1, 367; *CSP Scot.*, x, pp. 10-3.

dubious.⁸⁷⁰ The situation reached dramatic levels, when on 20 March, James protested Huntly's innocence to Fowler himself.⁸⁷¹

Since the beginning of March, William Asheby was informing that the discontented people in Scotland were 'many and strong.' In addition, he assured that they were expecting that summer both men and money from Spain. Thus, he enclosed with his dispatch a list of the two factions in Scotland. 'The Papist and discontented earls and Lords' included the usual suspects: Lennox, the earls of Huntly, Montrose, Errol, Crawford, Bothwell, Caithness, Athol, Sutherland, Murray, and Lord Claude Hamilton, Lord Seton, Hume, Gray, Livingston and Maxwell.⁸⁷² His advice was clear: 'a penie now spent will save manie as hundred.'⁸⁷³ Asheby was worried about James's 'youth years and wild nature,' because he could be abused by the Catholics and malcontents, especially the earl of Huntly, if he was not strengthened by the English Queen.⁸⁷⁴

By beginning of April, Huntly, Errol, Crawford and Bothwell had levied their troops against the Protestants. But although James was marching towards Stirling to meet the earl of Huntly and his party in Fife by 10 April, the 'mild nature' of the young King worried the English government.⁸⁷⁵ The Jesuit Fathers Crichton and Hay and Robert Bruce joined the earls of Huntly and Errol in Aberdeen.⁸⁷⁶ By 15 April, Bothwell had all his forces ready in the borders,⁸⁷⁷ with the intention of capturing James and completing the overthrow of the government.⁸⁷⁸

A narrative of the suppression of this conspiracy of the earls of Huntly, Errol, Crawford and Montrose – known as the 'Bridge of Dee' affair – kept in the British Library gives an interesting view of the event. The tract, probably written by an Englishman in Scotland between May and July 1589, narrated the overtures of Philip II to James VI after the failure of the Armada, and how, not finding James favourable,

⁸⁷⁰ Grant, 'The Brig o'Dee Affair,' in Goodare & Lynch, *The Reign of James VI*, p. 104.

⁸⁷¹ *CSP Scot.*, x, pp. 10-3; *RPC Scot.*, iv, pp. 360, 820-1, 367.

⁸⁷² *CSP Scot.*, ix, p. 703.

⁸⁷³ *ibid.*, ix, p. 702; *RPC Scot.*, iv, p. 364.

⁸⁷⁴ *CSP Scot.*, x, p. 14.

⁸⁷⁵ *ibid.*, x, p. 34.

⁸⁷⁶ *ibid.*, x, p. 38.

⁸⁷⁷ *ibid.*, x, pp. 40-1.

⁸⁷⁸ Elder, *Influences*, p. 174.

decided to instigate his subjects into a rebellion ‘to annoy Eng[land] with the ill neighbour of Scotland.’ Thus, James ‘preferring the publike good of Scotland and England to his particular interest, and the advacement of truw religion,’ decided to suffocate the revolt.⁸⁷⁹

As a matter of fact, it was thought that these ‘Catholic lords’ were expecting the arrival of a Spanish army in their support very shortly,⁸⁸⁰ which was repeated on 22 April, when Thomas Fowler, writing from Aberdeen, affirmed that the Spanish faction was waiting the arrival of a Spanish army. Fowler assured that the earl of Huntly wanted to send the master of Glamis – a declared Protestant and pro-English – to Parma as pledge.⁸⁸¹ However, this rebellion could not have a Spanish cause, but of internal affairs of the Scottish kingdom, because Parma had a few months earlier given strict orders to Mendoza to inform the Scottish Catholics that no Spanish military forces would be sent in their support in this year of 1589.⁸⁸²

Despite the fact that no ‘advices’ had been received from England in this dangerous time, James was decided to pursue them ‘hoping to surprise those caterpillers.’⁸⁸³ Finally, James defeated the rebel forces at the Bridge of Dee. On 4 May, the earl of Huntly was arrested and the other confederates dispersed, seeking to fly out of the country towards Flanders and Spain. William Asheby recommended that one or two English ships should depart to intercept them by sea.⁸⁸⁴ In the first week of May, the earl of Huntly was summoned, being accused of trafficking with Spaniards and Jesuits, to raise an army to disturb the whole realm, and bring foreign forces.⁸⁸⁵ The ministers called for justice and to root out any Catholicism in the kingdom.⁸⁸⁶ On 13 May, Bothwell was examined, and declared that he had entered with Huntly and others in an alliance with Spain to join forces ‘for reforming wrongs done to the King

⁸⁷⁹ BL, ‘An Oulde Stoary of the Brigg of Dee, written by Guitchard one of ye 4 sonnys of Aymon,’ Royal MS 18 A xvi; other accounts which put the blame of this plot on the Spanish King were recorded in BL, ‘Capitulation offered to and proclamation against Stewart (Francis) Earl of Bothwell,’ 1593-4, Add. MS 33,531, fos. 283-4 and in *The Life and Glorious Reign of Queen Elizabeth*, p. 10.

⁸⁸⁰ *CSP Scot.*, x, p. 36.

⁸⁸¹ *ibid.*, x, p. 44.

⁸⁸² *CSP Span.*, iv, pp. 479, 528, 548; Grant, ‘The Brig o’Dee Affair,’ in Goodare & Lynch, *The Reign of James VI*, pp. 105-6.

⁸⁸³ *CSP Scot.*, x, pp. 40-1.

⁸⁸⁴ *ibid.*, x, pp. 61-2.

⁸⁸⁵ NLS, ‘Summons against George Gordon, earl of Huntly,’ ADV MS 19.1.35, fo. 3; *CSP Scot.*, x, p. 68.

by England.’⁸⁸⁷ Thus, on 24 May, an indictment was issued against Huntly, Bothwell and Crawford for the treasonable dealings with Colonel Sempill, Robert Bruce, and the Fathers Hay and Crichton, all collaborators of the Spanish cause.⁸⁸⁸ Moreover, the earls of Montrose and Errol were summoned for the same reasons. The orders were clear: ‘they shall be pursued to death. This is to avoid a new rebellion.’⁸⁸⁹

Recently, Ruth Grant has pointed out that ‘Brig o’Dee may have been partly used as a bid to reinforce Scotland’s strategic position to Elizabeth, demonstrating that without her proper support, respect and commitment, Scottish policy could easily change.’⁸⁹⁰ As a matter of fact, Burghley wrote: ‘the state of the world is marvellously changed when we true Englishmen have cause for our own quietness to wish good success to a French king and a king of Scots; but seeing both are enemies to our enemies we have cause to join with them in their actions against our enemies.’⁸⁹¹

The summer of 1589 was one full of complications and bad news for Spain. In May, Philip had sent money to Parma to enable the preparation of a force for a surprise attack on the Isle of Wight, followed by a new fleet which would sail up the Channel to initiate the final conquest of the British Isles.⁸⁹² However, an Anglo-Dutch fleet launched a series of attacks on the coast of both Spain and Portugal for most of the summer. Another expedition, under the command of Drake and Norris, took and subsequently set fire to La Coruña and later landed near Lisbon, causing a great blow to Spain’s pride.⁸⁹³

The assassination of Henry III in 2 August transformed the entire international political scene. Immediately after his death, Henry of Navarre, the Huguenot leader, was proclaimed king of France. Philip’s reactions to these developments were predictably hostile, forcing him to concentrate all his efforts on France. As a result,

⁸⁸⁶ *ibid.*, x, p. 71.

⁸⁸⁷ *ibid.*, x, p. 73.

⁸⁸⁸ Calderwood, *History*, v, pp. 7-12, 14-36; see also Grant ‘The Brig o’Dee Affair,’ ch. 5 of Goodare & Lynch, *The Reign of James VI*.

⁸⁸⁹ *CSP Scot.*, x, p. 84.

⁸⁹⁰ Grant, ‘The Brig o’Dee Affair,’ in Goodare & Lynch, *The Reign of James VI*, p. 107.

⁸⁹¹ Burghley to Shrewsbury, 27 May 1589, printed in E. Lodge (ed.), *Illustrations of English History, biography and manners*, ii (London, 1791), p. 373.

⁸⁹² Parker, *The Grand Strategy*, p. 272.

⁸⁹³ LNMM, Sir William Munson, ‘Yearly observations of the English and Spanish fleets from the yeare

his plans for an invasion of the British Isles once again were inevitably postponed; the Spanish Council of State suggested that the fleet destined for England should instead land troops in Brittany, while the Army of Flanders, which had planned to attack the Isle of Wight, should invade northern France.⁸⁹⁴

However, by the beginning of November of that year, Parma had recovered and was already giving instructions to Sempill following a request of the Catholic nobility of Scotland for a commission to Philip II. Firstly, Sempill had to admit that there was little hope of James's conversion, since he 'had consented to the martyrdom of his own mother,' but this provoked the prospect of the succession to the English throne by a Protestant, which Philip would not tolerate. Thus, Sempill was instructed to remind Philip of the importance of Scotland in enabling Spain to invade England, letting Philip know that not only were the Catholics of Scotland ready for an immediate action against England, but also those in England. Subsequently, Sempill had to conduct a study of the ports, beaches or any other locations where an army could disembark; and how money – especially for Bothwell – as well as weapons and munitions could be sent without being intercepted by the English.⁸⁹⁵ Sempill reached the Escorial at the end of November. However, due to Cardinal Granvelle's death, he was remitted to don Cristobal de Moura and don Juan de Idiaquez, who ordered him to accompany Philip II to Tarazona as an adviser. Sempill departed from the Escorial at the beginning of December hoping to be able to convince Philip to undertake the enterprise of England via Scotland or, minimally, to send aid to the Scottish Catholics.⁸⁹⁶

In the meantime in Scotland, the Spanish faction was busily employed in plotting, and Sir William Asheby was asking for immediate action to be taken against them.⁸⁹⁷ By mid-November, a secret meeting had taken place with Crichton and Hay, David Graham of Fintry and the master of Gray, in the last one's house of Broughtie.⁸⁹⁸ Immediately, the said Jesuit Fathers and Robert Bruce departed from the port of Leith

1585 to the yeare 1602,' LEC/1, fo. 123.

⁸⁹⁴ Parker, *The Grand Strategy*, p. 273; Tenace, 'The Spanish Intervention in Brittany,' pp. 53-6.

⁸⁹⁵ SCA, 'Instruction for the Colonel William Sempill from the duke of Parma,' 12 Nov. 1589, CA4/1/6. See app. iii.

⁸⁹⁶ SCA, Colonel W. Sempill to Philip III, early seventeenth century, CA4/9/10.

⁸⁹⁷ BL, 'Correspondence and papers of the English ambassador,' Eg. MS 2,598, fo. 142.

⁸⁹⁸ *ibid.*, fos. 175-8; *CSP Scot.*, x, p. 202.

with instructions from the Scottish Catholic nobility. Crichton was directed to Parma; Hay to Rome to the Pope; and Bruce to Philip II. Their commission was to declare how the right time had come for an invasion of the country, now that James was away from the Isle.⁸⁹⁹

On 28 November, the English agent Alexander Hay reported that he had heard of the coming of a letter from Crichton, however, he was unsure if the letter was for Bothwell, Robert Bruce or James Knowis – a servant of the earl of Huntly.⁹⁰⁰ By the beginning of December, it was confirmed that Crichton had sent a letter to Bothwell, and William Asheby had been able to get a copy of it. However, the letter was ciphered, and Asheby had still not been able to arrest the bearer.⁹⁰¹

The daily advertisements of the landing of Spaniards in the following March multiplied,⁹⁰² and the possibility of this force joining with the Spaniards still remaining on the Scotland from the wrecks of the Armada, caused fear in the Protestants.⁹⁰³ Thus, on 1 December, Burghley wrote a memorandum in which he asked for the apprehension of the principal heads of the Spanish faction in the realm, before they would be able to assemble any forces or receive any money from the Low Countries.⁹⁰⁴ Moreover, it came to complete the advices on war presented by Mr. Bodenham a month before.⁹⁰⁵

In Spain, Persons was still trying to convince the Spanish government to undertake a second enterprise, a holy crusade against the heretics. For it he sent a memorandum to

⁸⁹⁹ Crichton had promised to his friends in Scotland that he would return to that realm by 6 December next. BL, 'Correspondence and papers of the English ambassador,' Eg. MS 2,598, fo. 177; *CSP Scot.*, x, p. 200.

⁹⁰⁰ Alexander Hay affirmed that in the summer of 1588, when the King of Scotland was in the north of the country, James Knowis passed with some Jesuits to Flanders. BL, Alexander Hay to William Asheby, 28 Nov. 1589, Eg. MS 2,598, fos. 175-8; *CSP Scot.*, x, p. 202.

⁹⁰¹ BL, William Asheby to Francis Walsingham, 4 Dec. 1589, Eg. MS 2,598, fo. 201; *CSP Scot.*, x, pp. 211-2.

⁹⁰² Thomas Fowler to Lord Burghley, 7 Dec. 1589. HMC *Salisbury*, iii, pp. 446-7; *CSP Scot.*, x, p. 215.

⁹⁰³ By 11 November 1589, the Spaniards already amounted 60 men, ready to embark for Spain. These 60 men were the last ones of the 500 who were wrecked in Burntisland. BL, William Asheby to Francis Walsingham, 11 Nov. 1589, Eg. MS 2,598, fo. 157; *CSP Scot.*, x, p. 193; a week later, the number of Spaniards awaiting in Leith to be transported had already reached the 100. *ibid.*, x, p. 195; see also Mowat, *The Port of Leith*, p. 143.

⁹⁰⁴ *CSP Scot.*, x, p. 206.

⁹⁰⁵ PRO, 'Mr. Bodenham's advice on war with Spain,' Nov. 1589, SP 94/3.

Martin de Idiaquez, Secretary of State, with 'los puntos principales para facilitar la empresa inglesa.'⁹⁰⁶

I beg you will continue to remind those gentlemen (i.e., the Council) of the following points, so as to get some decision about them at once, which is most important in his Majesty's interest:

1. The declaration about the succession to the crown.
2. The formation of the Board in Flanders on English affairs, as everything else depends upon that.
3. The going of the Scottish earls to cause a diversion.
4. The briefs of Stapleton and the others. If they be not obtained in time they are of no use afterwards, but I see the danger of delay.⁹⁰⁷

This accompanied his last work, 'Relation of some very notable martyredoms done in the village and University of Oxonio [Oxford] in England in this month of July of this last year of 1589,' in which he affirmed that the three fifth parts of the Isle were Catholics and that Protestant ministers did not dare to discuss with the Catholics, remarking upon the religious fervour in Scotland, thanks to the English missionaries.⁹⁰⁸

However, Philip II opted once again for a less risky approach to the Scottish matters. Maybe because of the continuous delays in the affairs of Flanders due to his bitter relations with Parma since the times of the Armada, which was damaging the common good,⁹⁰⁹ or maybe because he desired to derive more information and opinions, especially within that kingdom.

Thus, at the beginning of 1590, Philip II decided to create an intricate network of agents and informers using a large number of private individuals who were granted pensions. If in theory they differed from agents, the practise was very different, they transformed into a net of spies, whose volume and quality of information was sometimes greater than that offered by the agents themselves.

⁹⁰⁶ 'Principal points to facilitate the enterprise of England.' *CSP Span.*, iv, pp. 628-33.

⁹⁰⁷ *CSP Span.*, iv, p. 633.

⁹⁰⁸ 'Relación de algunos martyrios muy notables hechos en la villa y universidad de Oxonio de Inglaterra en el mes de Iulio, deste año passado de 1589,' in R. Persons, *Relación de Algunos Martyrios, que de nuevo han hecho los hereges en Inglaterra, y de otras cosas tocantes a nuestra santa y Católica Religión* (Madrid, 1590), pp. 21-41; Eguiluz, *Persons*, pp. 206-7.

⁹⁰⁹ *CSP Scot.*, x, p. 229.

However, Philip's intentions were immediately learned by the English, when at the end of January 1590, a Spanish carvel under the command of don Álvarez de Tórida and a Scotsman as pilot – James Colvin – was captured by Bothwell at James's command. The ship, of 36 oars, carried 50 men of all nations with muskets and five pieces of brass.⁹¹⁰ During his examination by the Privy Council, the Spanish captain declared that 'his chief errand in the realme was to try and exploir the noblemen and other in the countrie maist effectit to the friendship and cares of the King of Spaine, his master.' In addition, he assured that the Spanish monarch had offered 'ten million of gold to the raising and first outred of his army...gif it may be with the guidwill of the King of Scotland and consent of his Counsell, utherwys not.'⁹¹¹ After the trial, both, captain and pilot, were found guilty of plotting against the King and religion of the kingdom of Scotland and the ship was confiscated.⁹¹²

The English intelligence system was on alert, and just a few days later, English agents provided Elizabeth with the following list:

Scottish men and women receiving pensions from the King of Spain.⁹¹³

Francis Stewart Earle Bothwell ⁹¹⁴	300 d. [ducats/crowns] monthly
The Earle of Pearth as it is informed	300 d. monthly
Mr. George Carre	100 d. monthly
Mr. Andrewe Clarke	40 d. monthly
Adam Cumming	40 d. monthly
Sir James Lynsay in sute for Mr. Curle of Edenbrough	30 d. monthly
His Wife Geillis Moobray	30d. monthly
Jane Moobray, her sister	30d. monthly
Mr. Patrick Steward, now heere with the Earle Bothwell, received for an ayuda de costa	100d. monthly
The Layrds of Farnyhurst elder and younger received for an ayuda de costa. They are gone out of Spayne with intention to return agayne	200d. monthly
Coronell Symple living in Flanders	200d. monthly
Coronell Paton living in Flanders	100d. monthly

It was scarcely to be expected at this precise time, that Philip II could gain monetary or military support of the Pope to such overtures as those with the Scottish

⁹¹⁰ *ibid.*, x, p. 242.

⁹¹¹ Quoted by Duro, *Armada*, ii, pp. 459-64; see also Elder, *Influences*, p. 179.

⁹¹² *RPC Scot.*, iv, pp. 827-31; C. Saenz, 'The Adventures of the Spanish Barque' *Scots Link*, lx (2002), pp. 12-5.

⁹¹³ *CSP Scot.*, x, p. 225; Colville, *Letters*, p. 331.

⁹¹⁴ Since the times of the Armada the English intelligencers were informing of rumours touching the earl of Bothwell receiving money from the Spanish crown. See *CSP Scot.*, ix, p. 608.

Catholics.⁹¹⁵ But as a matter of fact, Philip was decided on rooting out any type of Protestantism in Europe. Thus, on 3 February, an English agent alerted Walsingham that the 6,000 men that Parma was going to send in aid of the leaguers in France, afterwards intended to pass to Newhaven and then, to embark to Scotland.⁹¹⁶ However, after a week of intense espionage,⁹¹⁷ on 10 February, Richard Wigmore affirmed that, according to Richard Douglas, ‘the Spaniards meant undoubtedly to land in Ireland.’⁹¹⁸ By the beginning of March, this rumour had mutated into a Spanish army under the command of Juan de Modena carrying enough gold or silver ‘to take up ten or twentie [or] thirtie thousand men in this cuntrie.’⁹¹⁹

Surprisingly, after the accusations against Bothwell for receiving a pension of Philip II, the earl was appointed to discover the Spanish plans. Richard Wigmore wrote: ‘He [Bothwell] is devoted to her Majesty’s service, and may be won to be such a servant unto her as Scotland cannot afford the like; the ministers are confirmed in their good opinion of him.’⁹²⁰

Firstly, according to Elizabeth’s direction, Bothwell wrote to Parma, on 17 March 1590.⁹²¹ The letter was carried by his servant James Graham –brother of David Graham of Fintry – who had instructions to entertain good intelligence with the duke, and to report to him the dangerous condition of his friends in the realm.⁹²² However, by April, Bothwell decided to cut off his intelligences with Parma and Spain, because his servant Captain Hackerston had been employed in Spain. As revenge, Bothwell decided to take possession of the Spanish barque of captain Terrida, which was still behind the Isle of May getting ready to depart for Dunkirk carrying the bishop of Derry and other practisers with letters for Spain.⁹²³

⁹¹⁵ See PRO, ‘Pope’s proposals to the King of Spain, and reply,’ 20-30 Jan. 1590, SP 94/3.

⁹¹⁶ *CSP Scot.*, x, p. 840.

⁹¹⁷ PRO, ‘Abstract of letters on intentions of Spain,’ 4-14 Feb. 1590, SP 94/3.

⁹¹⁸ *CSP Scot.*, x, p. 242.

⁹¹⁹ *ibid.*, x, p. 245.

⁹²⁰ *ibid.*, x, p. 242.

⁹²¹ *ibid.*, x, p. 247.

⁹²² BL, Bothwell’s message to the duke of Parma, 17 Mar. 1590, Cott. MS Calig. D.I., fo. 187; *CSP Scot.*, x, pp. 854-5, 253-4.

⁹²³ BL, Robert Bowes to Lord Burghley, 24 Mar. 1590, Cott. MS Calig. D.I., fo. 355; *CSP Scot.*, x, pp. 258, 263, 282; Saenz, ‘The Adventures of the Spanish Barque,’ pp. 12-5.

Philip II was ill, but he had declared to his secretary that his foreign commitments were not going to be dropped because ‘the religious issue involved takes priority over everything.’⁹²⁴ Thus, the rumours of a possible landing of Spanish forces in May next were spreading quickly.⁹²⁵ Although they were nothing but mere rumours, a new Protestant alliance was forming against Spain. James VI was treating with the King of Denmark how to ‘intymate to the King of Spain these motions, to forbear th’ invasion of this isle and come to conditions of peace;’⁹²⁶ and Elizabeth received a letter from Amurath III, the ‘Great Turck,’ stating that he had abandoned his intended attack on Poland at Elizabeth’s request, and was prepared to join in attacking Spain.⁹²⁷

Spain was clearly busy, entertained with the Protestants in France, and the summer of 1590 passed with the English espionage following the movements of Father James Gordon and his nephew – the earl of Huntly⁹²⁸ – and Bothwell’s persecution of the Spanish barque.⁹²⁹

At the end of November 1590, Robert Bowes was informed that another barque had lately arrived in the north of the realm with 12,000 crowns for the Catholics, brought by a pilot called Fleming and accompanied by an Englishman thought to be Holt – the confessor of Parma. Immediately, Holt met Father Gordon and Fintry, firstly alone at Kinnaird, and later at Glendoick with three noblemen. Robert Bowes solicited the Chancellor for the apprehension of these men, money and vessel; however, the Chancellor did not believe the report to be true.⁹³⁰

Nevertheless, in December 1590, the Protestant party of Scotland and the English government were becoming increasingly vociferous about the Catholic threat in

⁹²⁴ Parker, *Philip II*, p. 182.

⁹²⁵ *CSP Scot.*, x, p. 287.

⁹²⁶ *ibid.*, x, p. 290.

⁹²⁷ BL, ‘The coppie of a letter sent from the great Turck [Amurath III] to y^e Queene's Maiestie, 12 of June from Constatinople,’ MSS Stowe 161, fos. 35-6; in a contemporary document, it was recorded how the King of Spain learnt of these dealings of the Turcks with the Queen of England thanks to a letter intercepted in Germany. BL, titled ‘Nevves from Spayne and Holland conteyning. An information of English affayres in Spayne vvith a conference made theruppon in Amsterdame of Holland. VVritten by a Gentleman trauelour borne in the lov v countryes, and brought vp from a child in Ingland, vnto a Gentleman his frend and Ofte in London. At Amsterdam in Holland,’ Sept. 1593, Add. MS 600, fo. 38b.

⁹²⁸ *CSP Scot.*, x, pp. 331-5, 347-8, 353, 392, 395, 400.

⁹²⁹ *ibid.*, x, p. 361; Saenz, ‘The Adventures of the Spanish Barque,’ pp. 12-5.

⁹³⁰ *CSP Scot.*, x, p. 499; *ibid.*, x, p. 424.

Scotland. Maxwell had advertised Huntly to quit his intelligence with Philip II, Parma, the Pope and obviously, with his uncle, who supposedly departed immediately from the realm.⁹³¹ The situation became dramatic in February: James Gordon, supposedly in Flanders after the act of the Scottish Council of the 6 January,⁹³² was reported to still be in Scotland with his nephew giving mass daily; moreover, Fintry, received James's warrant for his liberty. Thus, Robert Bowes wrote: 'so the punishment threatened to the Papists is like to be easily passed over.'⁹³³ This affirmation became clear when, on 4 January 1591, Allen entered Scotland through Berwick with letters from Flanders. By the beginning of February, he had contacted George Kerr and some others of the Catholic nobility. In response, in April, George Kerr was sent into Flanders by the Catholic nobility with instructions for Parma.⁹³⁴

Meanwhile in Spain, Sempill had recently presented a highly unrealistic memorandum to Philip on 'the estate of the Catholic religion in the kingdom on Scotland.' The document described a scheme to establish the Catholic religion in Scotland by invading the kingdom with 3,000 men who would land in Orkney. Sempill believed, that once in Orkney, the earl of Caithness, to whom he refers as 'his brother,' would join them with another 4,000 men. After fortifying Orkney and with the two armies united, they would land at Broughty Ferry, near Dundee. This would force the enemy to advance through the mountains of Atholl, which were easily defensible, or by sea, for which they would need a massive fleet, which he believed difficult to assemble. Thus, Sempill pointed out that there were several advantages to the plan: firstly, Philip would be dignified with the work done for God and his Church; moreover, liberty of conscience would be granted to the Catholics; secondly, if Elizabeth would try to hinder the invasion, she would have to maintain three armies, two at sea, one on the West and the other in the East, and the third on land; subsequently, the expense of levying these armies would prevent Elizabeth from aiding the rebels in the Netherlands and attacking the Spanish fleet returning from the Indies. Finally, and more importantly, if Elizabeth were to die whilst James and she enjoyed good relations, he would be able to accede to the English throne without hindrance from Spain. Sempill believed that, once the enterprise was launched, the

⁹³¹ *ibid.*, x, p. 441.

⁹³² *ibid.*, x, p. 450.

⁹³³ *ibid.*, x, p. 460.

English Catholics and the King of France would join with the Spanish. Nevertheless, while the forces for the invasion were being gathered, Sempill suggested that Philip should send an ambassador to James, to provoke Elizabeth's suspicions. Sempill offered to go to discuss the plan with Philip,⁹³⁵ but it was dismissed since the internal problems, most significantly the riots in 1591 in Madrid, Toledo and Seville, were Philip's priority at this time.⁹³⁶

By April, news of this plan must have reached Scotland, when Robert Bowes informed Burghley that an army of 2,000 Spaniards was expected to pass to England and Scotland through Ireland. He also reported how the Irish rebel O'Rourke was trying to pass to Ireland to join his son and the Spanish forces once they landed.⁹³⁷ These were only rumours, however, since 7 March, the English agents had been informing of the Spanish navy getting ready to sail towards England.⁹³⁸ A month later, Burghley informed the Chancellor, of the discovery of the Spanish navy off the coast of the Scilly Isles and Cornwall; and that some Spanish frigates led by the Spaniards and pirates that year before had spoiled the coast men and fishers in the northern seas, were thought to have passed towards Shetland to annoy the fishermen there.⁹³⁹

At the beginning of August 1591, James VI and Robert Bowes were confidently informed that Bothwell was going to address himself to Parma.⁹⁴⁰ Since the end of June, there had been rumours saying that if Bothwell was not able to obtain James's favour, he will seek it from Philip II.⁹⁴¹ However, on 11 August, Bowes was contacted by 'a friend of Bothwell,' who told him that Bothwell might delay his trip to Spain 'to avoid evil to himself and troubles in the realm.'⁹⁴² Bothwell, had James's confidence,

⁹³⁴ *ibid.*, x, p. 470.

⁹³⁵ BL, Colonel W. Sempill, 'On Scottish affairs,' 1591, Add. MS 28,420, fos. 140-4; fully transcribed and translated in app. iv.

⁹³⁶ Parker, *Philip II*, p. 184.

⁹³⁷ *CSP Scot.*, x, p. 470.

⁹³⁸ PRO, 'Note of ships ready in Spain, and duplicate,' 7 Mar. 1591, SP 94/4.

⁹³⁹ *CSP Scot.*, x, pp. 518-20.

⁹⁴⁰ *ibid.*, x, p. 555.

⁹⁴¹ *ibid.*, x, p. 536.

⁹⁴² *ibid.*, x, p. 599.

who believed that he could be drawn from the Spanish cause. Thus, James did not want Bowes to deal in these matters.⁹⁴³

In the second week of October, James was informed that four English and Scottish Catholics were in Colonel Sempill's house in Edinburgh, ready to pass to Dunkirk in a barque of James Kincavell from Kirkcaldy. Thus, captain Hackerston, and another of Bothwell's servants took this barque against the owners' will and procured a warrant of the King and Council to capture all the plotters in Sempill's house, on 19 October.⁹⁴⁴

Surprisingly, on 10 November, Bowes informed Burghley that Bothwell had asked these Jesuits to write a favourable letter to Philip II, promising them part of the entertainment that Philip would decide to give him.⁹⁴⁵ By mid-November, James had been informed of Bothwell's intention 'to surprise and keep Orkney;' movement that was thought to be done as a pre-base for a new Spanish invasion. Bothwell had had an interview with Lady of Lindores – daughter of the earl of Orkney – in which he told her that he had visited her father in Orkney, wherein it was gathered that he purposed to take the castle and the island. The same was confirmed by the discovery of twelve of Bothwell's servants said to have embarked with muskets for Orkney. However, Robert Bowes thought that he would not adventure to enter in such attempt, but rather he would wait answer from Spain to the letter he sent with captain Hackerston. Bothwell was in a very weak position at that time, and there were many who thought that he would not adventure to enter into such an attempt.⁹⁴⁶

By the beginning of December, Bothwell still had not gone to Orkney, and was thought to be in Caithness.⁹⁴⁷ It was said that the payment of the earl's debts by some of his friends was what had persuaded him to pause his trip to Spain.⁹⁴⁸ Nevertheless, Gilbert Pennycooke, and Captain Hackerston and a third servant of Bothwell, were finishing the preparations to embark, on 11 and 12 December 1591, near the mouth of the Forth for Caithness. Once there, they intended to receive Bothwell's letters to the

⁹⁴³ *ibid.*, x, p. 566.

⁹⁴⁴ *ibid.*, x, p. 579.

⁹⁴⁵ *ibid.*, x, p. 585.

⁹⁴⁶ *ibid.*, x, p. 590.

⁹⁴⁷ *ibid.*, x, p. 593.

Spanish King, Crichton and some others, and then pass by the west seas to Spain. Beforehand, the Jesuits James Gordon and Robert Abercromby had already written to Crichton requiring him 'to command Captain Hackerston and the others to Philip II, signifying to that King the present state of Bothwell and offering his service to him.'⁹⁴⁹ Thus, the Parliament of Scotland published by proclamation that Bothwell was proscribed, and promised to reward those who were able to apprehend him.⁹⁵⁰

At the end of January 1592, Burghley was informed that Captain Hackerston had passed by ship to Spain, had lately come from Caithness and arrived at Leith with a pinnace to receive Bothwell.⁹⁵¹ Still in February 1592, the duke of Arran and the earl of Huntly passed into the west isles of Scotland pursuing him. Bothwell, dressed up as a beggar and accompanied only by his wife, intended to be shipped for Spain or Brittany.⁹⁵²

By 7 February, Walsingham was informed that Bothwell was at Borganad Barrese, and intended to seize Orkney, already having levied 360 men, and having two ships ready. The agent affirmed that 'this is done to assure the Spaniards to fynde harborrowe and refuge in any distress.' Thus, the report assured that in the following eight or ten days, Bothwell was going to receive a ship with gold, armour and munitions – 1500 pistols – from Parma. However, very surprisingly, this report also affirmed that 'yet he will still be at her Majesties devotion and will discharge himself, as he saith, honorably toward the King of Spain, with whom he will have no further dealing.'⁹⁵³

Obviously, this help did not come, but the English intelligence was in alert for any contact between Spain and Flanders and the kingdom of Scotland. At the beginning of February 1592, John Ogilvy of Powrie, a Scottish laird of a wealthy family, made a

⁹⁴⁸ *ibid.*, x, pp. 593-7.

⁹⁴⁹ *ibid.*, x, pp. 583-5; there already were rumours suspecting the earl of Bothwell of being in the Spanish payroll since the times of the Armada and of having received a thousand crowns before the Bridge of Dee by the King of Spain, but they were mere rumours; see for example *ibid.*, ix, pp. 608, 619; on Abercromby's involvement in this matter see M. Murphy, 'Robert Abercromby, S.J. (1513-1613) and the Baltic Counter-Reformation,' *IR*, xlx (1999), p. 66.

⁹⁵⁰ Pitcairn, *Trials*, i, part iii, pp. 280-1.

⁹⁵¹ *CSP Scot.*, x, p. 625.

⁹⁵² *ibid.*, x, pp. 632-3.

⁹⁵³ *ibid.*, x, pp. 842-3.

motion to go to Spain, to try to get liberty for all Scottish merchants to transport English wares from Philip.⁹⁵⁴ James refused the proposal unless he was able to get Elizabeth's permission.⁹⁵⁵ Nevertheless, the suspicion that this could be a Catholic plot occupied the English agents for nearly two months, until middle March, when Roger Aston affirmed to Bowes that Ogilvy had good intentions.⁹⁵⁶

By 28 April 1592, Robert Bowes informed of the discovery that the Irish rebel O'Rourke had tried to levy 2,000 soldiers in Scotland to be sent to Ireland, and also that there was a promise that 5,000 Spaniards were going to join them.⁹⁵⁷ One month later, this rumour said that these 5,000 Spaniards intended to land in Scotland in May or June next. Thus, an English intelligencer wrote:

T[he] King of Scotland is a poor prince...the nobility likewise poor, unconstant, naturally tumultuous and desirous of change, and envious of our good estate and her majesty's prosperity. From Scotland the Spaniards will be able to invade us by land whereas otherwise they must land out of their ships...by landing in Scotland they will...have a quiet landing and be assisted by sufficient companies of horse, trained for service, and inured by raids and forays on upon another; and have the best horses of England more in number than we have.⁹⁵⁸

Whether the Spanish forces pass into Scotland through the West of Ireland or by St George's Channel, it was most probable that they would try to land at the Firth of Forth. Thus, Elizabeth would be compelled to send an army to the north, for which many soldiers had to be drawn from Brittany, Normandy and, more important here, from the Low Countries.⁹⁵⁹

Bowes assured that James believed that this rumour was grounded on formed practices of the Jesuits with noblemen of Scotland, as happened before in the Bridge of Dee, and that the earl of Crawford had confessed to the King that he was tempted with offers of 3,000 crowns.⁹⁶⁰ The earl of Errol had already been called by the Assembly of the Kirk to answer accusations of receiving the Jesuit Father William

⁹⁵⁴ *ibid.*, x, p. 633.

⁹⁵⁵ *ibid.*, x, pp. 634-6.

⁹⁵⁶ *ibid.*, x, pp. 657-9.

⁹⁵⁷ *ibid.*, x, p. 672.

⁹⁵⁸ *ibid.*, x, pp. 688-91.

⁹⁵⁹ *ibid.*, x, pp. 689-91.

⁹⁶⁰ *ibid.*, x, pp. 699-700; R.B. Wernham, *After the Armada. Elizabethan England and the struggle for western Europe, 1588-1595* (Oxford, 1984), p. 457.

Ogilvy in his house and hearing mass openly at the very beginning of the month of June.⁹⁶¹

The troops levied in Spain were for France, and not for Scotland, as the rebels in the north of the country wished.⁹⁶² Nevertheless, the English government and Protestant party of Scotland knew that they should prevent the Catholics from convincing Philip II to direct these troops to Scotland. And, Robert Bowes was appointed to discover Philip's practices.

On 5 July, Francis Mowbray returned from Spain through England having brought with him a letter from Spain, however, Bowes was informed that it was 'of very small effect.' Nevertheless, Bowes had a meeting with Mr. Mowbray, and gave him order to convey his letter to the earl of Crawford.⁹⁶³ Moreover, on 7 July, John Sempill of Felwood – a pensioner of Philip II – and father John Brown were arrested by Sir Robert Melville in Leith when they were about to embark to pass to Spain. They had been in the north, and were carrying letters from the rebels in those parts to Colonel Sempill. Subsequently, they were examined by the provost and bailies of Edinburgh about the letters they had with them, and afterwards were delivered to Robert Bowes. However, only being able to find matters of little importance, Bowes realised that they had been fooled. He was informed that the Catholics had sent a special person 'of greater quality than John Sempill' to Parma.⁹⁶⁴ Bowes was decided upon discovering what was happening, and 'by the persuasion of his friends.' John Sempill offered himself to Bowes to discover the Catholic plots after his coming from the court of Parma.⁹⁶⁵

Nevertheless, the person that Bowes was looking for was the Jesuit Father William McQuhirrie. The Jesuit had arrived to Montrose from Flanders in a French ship. McQuhirrie hasted one of his fellow Jesuits, the Father James Gordon, with his commission, which was to immediately ask the northern rebel nobles to assemble their forces to join an imminent Spanish landing. The Chancellor affirmed that the

⁹⁶¹ *CSP Scot.*, x, p. 686.

⁹⁶² *ibid.*, x, pp. 699-700.

⁹⁶³ *ibid.*, x, pp. 726-7.

⁹⁶⁴ *ibid.*, x, p. 721.

⁹⁶⁵ *ibid.*, x, pp. 726-7.

two English Jesuits had been directed to Scotland from Holt, Parma's confessor.⁹⁶⁶ Nevertheless, it was clear that Parma was seeking to stir and continue troubling this realm, as with the second coming of the 'Spanish Barque' to the Isles of Shetland and Orkney,⁹⁶⁷ but that Philip had no intention to send any forces that year to Scotland.⁹⁶⁸

Crichton was still at the Spanish court, failing to interest Philip in Scottish affairs, decided to leave the Iberian Peninsula in August 1592.⁹⁶⁹ Bowes was informed in the first week of August that Crichton had written to Captain Hackerston answering former letters of his master, Bothwell.⁹⁷⁰ This could have been a normal communication between discontents, but the situation complicated a week later, when Bowes learnt that the earl of Huntly had made offers to Bothwell for his friendship, and one of his informers, called Logie, assured that Bothwell had received 100,000 crowns from Philip.⁹⁷¹ On 17 August, Bowes reported to Burghley that 'sundry principal Catholics have sure promised of treasure or forces to be sent hither this summer by the King of Spain, wherein I am informed that some small number of pistolets has come, that the Jesuits and instruments labouring to draw noblemen.'⁹⁷²

This same week, James Young – alias Dingley – was arrested. Dingley, a young English priest, was immediately interrogated by the Lord Treasurer, to whom he assured that he had heard Persons saying that Philip II had promised to Sir William Stanley to invade England, but not before 1593, because of the problems in France. By this time, he hoped to arrive in Britain and from there, with 16 great ships and 10,000 men, reach Ireland. Then, Sir William Stanley would be able to go to his country, where the earl of Derby would be prepared to help him. He hoped also that the young Lord Strange could help. Stanley's matter was going to be prepared for the following April.⁹⁷³

⁹⁶⁶ *ibid.*, x, p. 733.

⁹⁶⁷ *ibid.*, x, p. 740.

⁹⁶⁸ *ibid.*, x, p. 735.

⁹⁶⁹ PRO, Monsieur Pietro Milino [Persons] to Pope Clemente VIII, from Madrid, 2 Aug. 1592, Roman Transcripts, cxi, fo. 154, printed in F. Shearman, 'Fr. Crichton and The Spanish Blanks,' *IR*, miscellany, iv (1953), p. 60.

⁹⁷⁰ *CSP Scot.*, x, pp. 747-8.

⁹⁷¹ *ibid.*, x, p. 754.

⁹⁷² *ibid.*, x, p. 760.

⁹⁷³ *CSP Dom.*, iii, pp. 254-5.

Dingley was examined again, now by Lord Keeper, Lord Buckhurst and Mr John Fortescue, about the things that he had heard in Spain. In the confession made in prison on Thursday 24 August, he related his adventures abroad and in his way back to England. He said that Allen sent him to look for two priests, Wardord and Almond, to Antwerp and Genoa respectively, and then to Spain. Thus, he assured that Crichton was going to be sent to Scotland to negotiate with the Scottish nobles. Persons would go with the fleet for its better direction, and Allen was going to go secretly to the Low Countries, but not continue to England until the operation was decided.⁹⁷⁴

On 14 September 1592, in an interrogation by Lord Puckering, Lord Buckhurst and Mr Fortescue, Dingley affirmed that Parsons was to go into Spain to solicit Philip's aid for the Scots. He claimed that 'if Parsons were displaced, the forwardness of the Spaniard would cool by itself.'⁹⁷⁵

Dingley continued relating all he knew about the matters of the English Catholics abroad in the following days. This time also from prison, informed Puckering about a plot by which Morgan planned to depose Parma and to put in his place the duke of Savoy.⁹⁷⁶

A report being spread abroad that the Prince [of Parma] should be removed from Flanders, the Duchess of Feria made an importunate suit to the King of Spain that she might be appointed Governess there, of which the King certified D[octo]r Allen, who seemed to like it. There upon she made means to have her son, the Duke of Feria appointed General of the Army then preparing; all which was most likely to have had effect if it had not been disclosed by letter out of Flanders, that it was a cover plot devised by Morgan and his adherents. Parsons informed the King of this, and he commanded the Duchess to keep her house, and not to make further suit in the matter.⁹⁷⁷

Persons, in an interview with Philip II, assured the monarch that this manoeuvre intended to obtain the crown of England for James VI. Obviously, in this conspiracy it was necessary the collaboration of the duke of Savoy, who, after gaining Flanders by this plot, would be very likely to be disposed – or at least the conspirators thought – to help the Scot. Thus, this plot was destroyed by Persons.⁹⁷⁸

⁹⁷⁴ *ibid.*, iii, pp. 255-6.

⁹⁷⁵ *ibid.*, iii, p. 270.

⁹⁷⁶ *ibid.*, iii, pp. 256-7.

⁹⁷⁷ *ibid.*, iii, p. 267.

The autumn of 1592 was marked for the rumours that Philip and Parma had ‘promised to send, next spring, 5,000 strangers into Scotland, with sufficient treasure to levy and pay 10,000 men to invade England.’ James reported Bowes that he had received offers from Parma on behalf of Philip. The messenger, Sempill, had told James that Philip would provide 40,000 crowns to be delivered to Bothwell, to be distributed between him and the Scottish Catholics. However, the claim that ‘now the King of Spain is content and only to give and deliver all these crowns to the King of Scots himself, but also by his further aid to enable him to obtain and enjoy the kingdom of England’,⁹⁷⁹ leaves clear that the claim was untrue.

Obviously, this matter worried the Protestant party, but what bothered them far more was the impunity with which the Jesuits crossed the country. Both matters were complementary; James Gordon, Alexander McQuhirrie and Robert Abercromby were still in Scotland, supposedly dealing there for the coming of Spanish men and money.⁹⁸⁰ Their dealings lasted the following months, however, neither men nor money arrived to Scotland from Spain. Finally, they departed from a port near Seton at the end of November.⁹⁸¹

Parma’s death at the beginning of December 1592 did not stop the Spanish espionage in Scotland, but had left it very badly injured. Mathew Bayles, who carried the news of the duke’s death to Scotland, also carried with him letters of Robert Bruce from Flanders for the rebel earls.⁹⁸² However, Bruce, who for many years had been working as spy for the duke, just after his death, entered into the service of Lord Burghley.⁹⁸³

In fact, the Spanish net of espionage was in clear decline when, at the end of 1592 George Kerr – a brother of Mark Kerr the Abbot of Newbattle, and member of the King’s Council – was arrested on the Isle of Cumbrae, by Andrew Knox, the minister

⁹⁷⁸ Eguiluz, *Persons*, p. 222.

⁹⁷⁹ *CSP Scot.*, x, pp. 804-8.

⁹⁸⁰ *ibid.*, x, p. 787.

⁹⁸¹ *ibid.*, x, p. 810.

⁹⁸² *ibid.*, x, p. 824.

⁹⁸³ Robert Bruce was relaxed from the horn by the Privy Council of Scotland on 10 March 1593. *Warrender Papers*, ii, pp. 182-3.

of Paisley.⁹⁸⁴ Kerr intended to join there with John Leslie and James Beaton ‘to take Mr. Jamison’s barque, lying before Ayr for Spain.’⁹⁸⁵ It was Doctor MacCartney, an apothecary of Edinburgh, who had contacts with the Catholic faction, who informed Robert Bowes of Kerr’s intended journey.⁹⁸⁶

Kerr had already been part of the Spanish intrigues in Scotland. In April 1591, he had been sent to Flanders by the Scottish Catholic nobility.⁹⁸⁷ In May 1591, returned to Scotland with letters by Colonel Sempill, Colonel Boyd, Robert Bruce and William Clitherow for the Catholic nobles.⁹⁸⁸ However, at that time, the Chancellor had resolved to leave him to his own way.⁹⁸⁹

In fact, Hew Barclay was arrested only a few days before Kerr, under accusation of possessing a band, which would implicate the Catholic in an invasion plot. The band was never found,⁹⁹⁰ but this time Kerr had been arrested carrying with him a number of blanks, which Bowes described as:

eight clean sheets of fair and gilded paper whereon nothing is seen written save only that some are subscribed solely by William Earl of Angus, some by George Earl of Huntly, some by Francis Earl of Errol, some jointly by all three, some by the three Earls and the Laird of Auchindoun [Adam Gordon of Auchindoun]. They are not directed to any person, yet by the humble words in the subscriptions they seem to be addressed to a King or person of high estate. With these blanks are enclosed the seals of the arms of the three Earls named. The seals are so set down that they may be removed and affixed to the blanks.⁹⁹¹

On 31 December, Kerr was brought to Edinburgh. While he was being interrogated, rumours about the imminent coming from Spain of 7,000 soldiers under the command of the duke of Pastrana, to invade the country.⁹⁹² The news of the conspiracy worried Elizabeth, who immediately wrote to James to ‘rake it to the bottom.’⁹⁹³

⁹⁸⁴ Shearman, ‘The Spanish Blanks,’ p. 81.

⁹⁸⁵ *CSP Scot.*, x, p. 828.

⁹⁸⁶ Shearman, ‘The Spanish Blanks,’ p. 87.

⁹⁸⁷ *CSP Scot.*, x, p. 470

⁹⁸⁸ *ibid.*, x, p. 532.

⁹⁸⁹ *ibid.*, x, pp. 518-20.

⁹⁹⁰ Shearman, ‘The Spanish Blanks,’ p. 88.

⁹⁹¹ *CSP Scot.*, x, p. 828; see also J. Row, *The History of the Kirk of Scotland* (Wodrow Society, 1842), pp. 145-50.

⁹⁹² *CSP Scot.*, xi, p. 16.

⁹⁹³ Elizabeth I to James VI, Jan. 1593. Elizabeth, *Letters*, pp. 224-5.

Just one day after Kerr was imprisoned in Tollbooth, the earl of Angus arrived at Edinburgh. Immediately, he was also imprisoned until his involvement and extent of it could be determined by the authorities.⁹⁹⁴ By mid-January, Kerr had already confessed that the blanks were part of a plot for a new Spanish invasion of England taking Scotland as base. The people he accused of being implicated were the three rebel earls, Huntly, Angus and Errol; David Graham of Fintry, who was imprisoned at the time in Stirling Castle; the Jesuit Fathers James Gordon and Robert Abercorn, at that time in Scotland; and Crichton, who was working in Spain.⁹⁹⁵

About 29 January, Kerr affirmed that the Blanks were letters of credit given to him by the earls to Philip II, the Pope and other, to ask for a Spanish ambassador to be sent to Scotland 'with money to relieve the Jesuits and instruments travelling here...and to entertain the noblemen, courtiers and parties favouring the cause, and to tempt the King himself.'⁹⁹⁶ Kerr assured that he had been forced to sign a confession prepared beforehand by James VI himself and George Young.⁹⁹⁷

Nevertheless, reports like that of Robert Cecil in the English Parliament declaring that 'the King of Spain's malice daily increaseth against us; the number of Papists daily increaseth or at leastwise becomes more manifest,'⁹⁹⁸ had caused considerable stir and the Protestants saw their opportunity to finally defeat the Catholics in Scotland.⁹⁹⁹ Huntly, Errol and Aunchindoun were declared rebels and their houses to be delivered into the King's hands. On 13 February 1593, the earl of Angus, was able to escape directing himself to the north to meet with Huntly and the others. Supposedly, he left a letter to James VI in his chamber assuring that 'he has not sought to bring Spaniards into Scotland.'¹⁰⁰⁰

⁹⁹⁴ Shearman, 'The Spanish Blanks,' pp. 81-2.

⁹⁹⁵ *ibid.*, p. 82; Crichton was at the Spanish court, but he was not being successful interesting the King of Spain to send forces for Scotland. Very shortly, he would depart to go to the Rome to see the Pope. *CSP Scot.*, xi, p. 61.

⁹⁹⁶ *ibid.*, xi, pp. 22, 23, 33, 34; Shearman, 'The Spanish Blanks,' p. 82

⁹⁹⁷ *CSP Scot.*, xi, p. 40. In this same report, Bowes affirms that James VI insisted on the application of torture in Kerr's interrogation.

⁹⁹⁸ Shearman, 'The Spanish Blanks,' p. 90.

⁹⁹⁹ *ibid.*, pp. 81-104.

¹⁰⁰⁰ *CSP Scot.*, xi, p. 49.

On 15 February, Kerr gave a new confession, in which he declared not to know any other conspirators, but the nobles who had subscribed the blanks. This confession cleared Fintry of any involvement in the affair.¹⁰⁰¹ Despite Kerr's efforts, Fintry was brought to Edinburgh from Stirling Castle. He was interrogated on 13 February 1593 by the Justice Clerk,¹⁰⁰² and only two days later condemned and executed in Edinburgh for his treason. Before he was beheaded 'he professed to die a Catholic, for which profession he was before excommunicated; and so ended his life with some few prayers in Latin.'¹⁰⁰³

On 5 March, the Council raised a 'proclamation against the earls of Huntly, Angus, and Errol and others.'¹⁰⁰⁴ On the next day, Burghley was informed that 'all the rebel earls have fled, slender accompanied, to Caithness and the Isles.' It was claimed in the same report that two barques were prepared in Caithness to transport the earls by the west seas, probably to Spain.¹⁰⁰⁵

Kerr was examined for the final time in May 1593, this time about his doing with Mr. David Lawes, who was thought to have 'received the packets of the rebels and Jesuits at the Grange, the house of Mr. George's mother.' Kerr was believed to have delivered the packets to Lawes to be carried to Flanders.¹⁰⁰⁶ However, Lawes was never arrested. He was thought to have met the rebel earls at St Johnstone in October 1593, but he had already left for Antwerp.¹⁰⁰⁷ Kerr escaped from his prison in Edinburgh Castle on June 1593,¹⁰⁰⁸ which provoked suspicions in the Kirk about James's behaviour. James had not seemed worried about the alleged treason of the earls nor the escape of Kerr,¹⁰⁰⁹ however, only a month previously, Bowes assured that the King himself had insisted on the application of torture to gain Kerr's

¹⁰⁰¹ Shearman, 'The Spanish Blanks,' p. 93.

¹⁰⁰² 'The Laird of Fintry's deposition,' 13 Feb. 1593. *Warrender Papers*, ii, pp. 194-6; his further deposition was printed in *ibid.*, ii, pp. 197-8.

¹⁰⁰³ *CSP Scot.*, xi, p. 57; Shearman, 'The Spanish Blanks,' p. 94.

¹⁰⁰⁴ *CSP Scot.*, xi, p. 66; also inventoried in R. Steele (ed.), *Tudor and Stuart Proclamations*, ii (London, 1910), p. 255.

¹⁰⁰⁵ *CSP Scot.*, xi, p. 68.

¹⁰⁰⁶ *ibid.*, xi, p. 88.

¹⁰⁰⁷ *ibid.*, xi, pp. 208-9.

¹⁰⁰⁸ Calderwood, *History*, v, p. 254.

¹⁰⁰⁹ Shearman, 'The Spanish Blanks,' p. 83.

confession.¹⁰¹⁰ Nevertheless, James did not seem worried at any time during the process.¹⁰¹¹

It was clear that the number of Spanish factionaries increased throughout the realm,¹⁰¹² maybe because the Jesuits seemed to have been able to say mass publicly, and enter and leave the realm without any impediment.¹⁰¹³ The possibility of the Protestant party plotting the discovery of the ‘Spanish Blanks’ to gain a persecution against the Catholics of the realm does not seem difficult to believe. The Spanish intelligence had been very active in the realm for over a decade, and this was not the first time that espionage letters were seized and a plot was discovered. What Kerr carried with him were probably letters of credit that would provide him with recommendations from those who had been appointed by Sempill at the end of 1588.

The rumours of new Spanish plots radically increased during the summer of 1593. Henry of Navarre finally embraced the Catholic religion, once the leader of the French Protestant party, he announced his conversion in July 1593.¹⁰¹⁴ Now, it seemed clear that Philip II’s next priority would be England. Firstly, Robert Bowes was informed that William Orde, a Scottish man and a Catholic, who had been sent to Spain to gain the favour from Philip for the Scottish Catholics, had lately passed from Madrid to Flanders, and from there, to Scotland, where he had been apprehended. But, he only carried letters from Philip addressed to Scottish merchants to trade in Spain.¹⁰¹⁵ It was also said that Sempill had travelled in a ship belonging to John Scott – a merchant from Leith – from Spain to Newhaven, in France, and from there to the Water of Clyde, in the west of Scotland. Supposedly, he carried with him gold for the rebel earls. However, Sempill had not left Spain.¹⁰¹⁶ Another Scotsman, called Patrick Hering, was said to have passed from Flanders to Scotland, with some letters from Crichton.¹⁰¹⁷ Moreover, a Spaniard called Verdigo, had supposedly landed in Orkney ‘with great store of gold.’¹⁰¹⁸ And a fourth Scotsman, Adam Vaughop, had arrived at

¹⁰¹⁰ *ibid.*, p. 91.

¹⁰¹¹ *ibid.*, p. 83.

¹⁰¹² *CSP Scot.*, xi, p. 193; see also Colville, *Letters*, pp. 258-9.

¹⁰¹³ *CSP Scot.*, xi, pp. 179, 190.

¹⁰¹⁴ Parker, *Philip II*, p. 182.

¹⁰¹⁵ *CSP Scot.*, xi, p. 107.

¹⁰¹⁶ *ibid.*, xi, p. 697.

¹⁰¹⁷ *ibid.*, xi, p. 700.

¹⁰¹⁸ *ibid.*, xi, p. 166.

Stonehaven (Stanehyve?) from Spain, with Spanish pistols for the rebels.¹⁰¹⁹
However, none of them proved true.

Meanwhile, in Spain, Philip had for the first time found open opposition to his foreign policy. On 6 May 1593, a deputy of the Castilian court said: 'although the wars with the Dutch, England and France are holy and just, we must beg Your Majesty that they may cease.' This claim exasperated Philip, who had not intention of abandoning his holy crusade.¹⁰²⁰

¹⁰¹⁹ *ibid.*, xi, pp. 194-5.

¹⁰²⁰ Quoted in Parker, *Philip II*, p. 184.

CHAPTER IV

Crescendo, Settlement and Death

This last period of Philip II's life and reign was marked by the critical health of the monarch, the exhaustion of the Spanish treasury, and the internal problems of the kingdom.¹⁰²¹ However, the Jesuits were still involved in political intrigues to bring about direct Spanish intervention in Scotland, in order to gain religious toleration in that realm. The Catholic element in Scotland had been badly wounded by the 'Spanish Blanks' affair¹⁰²² and lacked any organisational capacity. However, the Kirk still feared the strength of the Catholics and that a grant of toleration might be issued.¹⁰²³ In 1592, the Kirk had received further confirmation of its status by means of the 'Golden Acts,' which by annulling most of the 'Black Acts' of 1584 restored the Kirk's privileges. Scotland's Kirk was thus established with jurisdiction in spiritual matters under the General Assembly, synods and presbyteries. In fact, the 'Golden Acts' contained deficiencies, one being that the mere existence of the Acts in Scotland's statute book tacitly confirmed the right of parliament to legislate in ecclesiastical matters and did not protect the Kirk from encroachments by the monarch.¹⁰²⁴ Nevertheless, as Pauline Croft has indicated, the Kirk was increasing its influence on society in Scotland.¹⁰²⁵

With its network of collaborators in Scotland nearly annihilated after the 'Spanish Blanks' affair, it is understandable that Spain would welcome proposals of new routes for Philip's invasion plans. In February 1593, Edmund MacGauran, the leading figure of the Irish exiled community in Spain, wrote to Juan de Idiáquez, informing him that all the hereditary lords of Ireland, amongst whom were O'Donnell, the Bourkes and O'Rourke, had promised to support a Spanish invasion of Ireland. O'Donnell believed that it was a propitious time for Spain to invade Ireland because it could be conquered at little cost as well as to be used to divert the English from interfering in the affairs of France and Flanders. The presentation of the Irish cause at the Spanish court was

¹⁰²¹ See chs. 8 and 9 of Williams, *Philip II*.

¹⁰²² Hicks, 'Sir Robert Cecil, Father Persons and the Succession, 1600-1601,' *Archivum Historicum Societatis Iesu*, xxiv, fasc. 47 (1955), p. 106; see also V. Houliston, 'The Hare and the Dram: Robert Person's writings on the English succession, 1593-1596,' *Renaissance Studies*, xiv (2000), pp. 235-259.

¹⁰²³ Shearman, 'The Spanish Blanks,' pp. 81-104.

¹⁰²⁴ Lee, *Great Britain's Solomon*, pp. 74-6.

¹⁰²⁵ P. Croft, *King James* (Basingstoke, 2003), pp. 28-9.

entrusted to the archbishop of Tuam.¹⁰²⁶ Subsequently, Idiáquez wrote a memorandum for Philip. The Irish request for military and financial aid proved a failure; with the sessions of the Estates General about to address the succession to the French throne, which Philip wished for his daughter, the *Infanta* Isabel, Philip decided against taking immediate action.¹⁰²⁷ Although the Irish lords were unsuccessful in acquiring aid on this occasion, it was clear enough that Philip was increasingly interested in using Ireland in his strategy against Elizabeth.¹⁰²⁸

Meanwhile in Scotland, the English faction was increasingly worried not only because of the Jesuits, who had had a continuous presence in the realm, but also by the great number and the wealth of the Spanish sympathisers ‘both about his Majesty [James VI] and throughout the realm.’¹⁰²⁹ Moreover, on 9 October 1593, Robert Bowes informed Burghley that because of the last approach of the ministers to Bothwell, he might have provoked James to ‘take the King of Spain for his [patron].’¹⁰³⁰

Soon thereafter, the ministers confirmed the excommunication of Huntly and Errol, as well as Angus, Aunchindoun and Sir James Chisholm; simultaneously, they preached and warned the people of Scotland not to stray from Protestantism. The paranoia about Spanish sympathisers was taking over Scotland. On the night of 21 October, a rumour ran across Edinburgh that a mass of Spanish gold had been intercepted by the officers of the town and transported for safe keeping to the Tollbooth. Subsequently, a stranger was captured with a trunk. However, when they opened the trunk there was only 4,000 merks of Scottish gold.¹⁰³¹

Indeed, there were many reasons for their worries. In July 1593, the Catholic nobles of Scotland had sent a letter to Philip II requesting his aid against England and the Protestants of their own country. Their letter, in which they claimed that some of them were being persecuted by James, was sent with an English priest to the Spanish court. ‘But as they dared not send their signatures so soon after the other affair [the Spanish

¹⁰²⁶ H. Morgan, *Tyrone's Rebellion* (London, 1999), p. 141.

¹⁰²⁷ Morgan, *Tyrone's Rebellion*, p. 142.

¹⁰²⁸ García Hernán, *Irlanda y el Rey Prudente*, pp. 186-7.

¹⁰²⁹ *CSP Scot.*, xi, p. 193; Colville, *Letters*, pp. 258-9.

¹⁰³⁰ *CSP Scot.*, xi, pp. 194-5.

¹⁰³¹ *ibid.*, xi, pp. 208-9.

Blanks] they sent the priest with a token to Father Persons of the Society of Jesus, to whom he was already well known.'¹⁰³²

The bearer dressed as a soldier was John Cecil, a young English student of the seminary of Valladolid.¹⁰³³ The letter which he presented to Philip II proposed James's capture. This would assure that Scotland would serve Spain to obstruct the English movements, and that the Spaniards would be able to use the Scottish ports as a base for a landing on their quest of invading England.¹⁰³⁴

Obviously, this letter did not provoke an immediate reaction from the Spanish King and Persons decided that John Cecil would be of more use working for the cause in Scotland. Thus, on 31 August 1593, Persons wrote from Valladolid to don Juan de Idiaquez, Secretary of State, asking him to give money to John Cecil and another three English students to return to Scotland.¹⁰³⁵

Federico Eguiluz has explained how an old project, supported by the duke of Sessa, the Spanish ambassador to Rome, to obstruct James's accension to the English throne after the death of Elizabeth was brought up again. Sessa, Cardinal Aldebrandino, Father Claudio Aquaviva and Persons, among other Jesuits, met in Rome to discuss the feasibility of the appointment of three bishops for the north of England and the frontier with Scotland. One for Blackwell, one for Durham and a third for Carlisle; receiving 2,000 crowns to be split between them. Their mission would be spiritual, but also they would organise a support group for the candidature of the Spanish *Infanta*, Isabel Clara Eugenia, for the English throne and thus, obstruct James's accension to the English crown. However, very soon afterwards the idea was dismissed.¹⁰³⁶

Perhaps, this was what had incited the rebel earls to send a bearer, at the beginning of October 1593, to deliver letters and messages to the earl of Mansfeldt and then pass to West Flanders, and from there to see Philip II. The messenger, who was none other

¹⁰³² *CSP Span.*, iv, p. 603; also quoted by Eguiluz, *Persons*, p. 222.

¹⁰³³ *ibid.*, p. 223.

¹⁰³⁴ *CSP Span.*, iv, pp. 607-8;

¹⁰³⁵ *ibid.*, iv, pp. 606-7; Eguiluz, *Persons*, p. 223.

¹⁰³⁶ Eguiluz, *Persons*, p. 242; about the 1582 plan involving the appointment by the Pope of three

than the notorious Robert Bruce, went in a ship belonging to David Hay, a burghess and skipper of Kirkcaldy. Robert Bowes had learnt of his departure and ordered the arrest of the ship in Yarmouth.¹⁰³⁷

Bruce had arrived at the Escorial by mid-October and, by the end of the month, he had already left for Scotland.¹⁰³⁸ On 17 November, Bowes informed Burghley of a rumour that Robert Bruce had returned to Scotland from Flanders and had brought with him 24,000 crowns: 3,000 for Lord Hume, Captain of James's guard; 10,000 to be offered to James himself; and the rest for the earls of Huntly and Errol.¹⁰³⁹ This was quite improbable because in the spring of 1593, an army was withdrawn from the Low Countries; an operation that had exhausted Spanish treasury, costing over 1,370,613 crowns.¹⁰⁴⁰

However, the rumours continued and Bowes was informed that the inhabitants of the north of Scotland were expecting the arrival of a Spanish force from Dunkirk, Nieuport and Flanders.¹⁰⁴¹ This force was going to be preceded by Jesuits, and James VI was informed that Father James Gordon, William Gordon – the earl of Huntly's third brother¹⁰⁴² – and another young gentleman of the house of the Gordon, had passed to Dunkirk in a ship belonging to David Hay, who had also transported Bruce to Flanders just a month before.¹⁰⁴³

Even on 20 December, the English espionage system was alleging that the three earls were plotting with Philip II to invade England through Scotland, assuring that 'we have most manifest proofs both out of Spain and the Low Countries.'¹⁰⁴⁴

In the autumn of 1593, Henry IV of France had been forced to convert to Catholicism and negotiate with his Catholic rebels. Elizabeth was horrified; Henry could now join

bishop for the English villages near the Scottish border see pp. 54, 56, 72 of this thesis.

¹⁰³⁷ *CSP Scot.*, xi p. 217.

¹⁰³⁸ *ibid.*, xi, pp. 245-7.

¹⁰³⁹ *ibid.*, xi, pp. 226-8.

¹⁰⁴⁰ Eguiluz, *Persons*, p. 243.

¹⁰⁴¹ Williams, *Philip II*, p. 220.

¹⁰⁴² William Gordon had been educated at Douai, where he became a Franciscan. *Scots Peerage*, iv, p. 541.

¹⁰⁴³ *CSP Scot.*, xi, pp. 226-8; *ibid.*, xi, p. 234.

¹⁰⁴⁴ *ibid.*, xi, p. 239.

the Spaniards against her despite Elizabeth's former aid to him.¹⁰⁴⁵ Nevertheless, the 'promise of Henry to maintain friendship with Queen Elizabeth in consideration of the aid given by her against the King of Spain,' had given some relief to Elizabeth.¹⁰⁴⁶ However, secret reports from France had already advised of 'great preparations of the King of Spain's ships both by land and sea' in France and Brittany. This same source had reported that the Governor of Bloy Castle [near Bordeaux] had not only sent ships to Spain for supplies of gunpowder, but was also going to give shelter to the 800 heavy ships that were to sail from Spain on route to Scotland before the following October. The reports had claimed that Spain would 'cause the Scottish ships to fight against the English ships 'by extremity.' There were, supposedly, three ships at the port of Leith ready to set sail for Spain.¹⁰⁴⁷

On 22 December 1593, Robert Bowes finally confirmed to Burghley, in four or five letters from Spain and Bordeaux, that it had been assured that an army was being prepared in Spain to embark for Scotland. He had also been informed by other secret letters that a messenger had been sent from the Scottish nobility to Philip II, to ask him not only to send an army from Spain, but also to send another from the Low Countries.¹⁰⁴⁸ Thus, Bowes showed James VI a letter by James Craig from Bordeaux to his brother Thomas Craig – an advocate at Edinburgh – dated 4 December 1593. The letter said:

There is of truth an army in Spain making ready to depart, but methinks they be first for Blovet in Britannye, there to abide their second enterprise.

I understand from a credible man who was at the Court of Spain in October last that letters were come out of Scotland to the King [of Spain], and other particulars and that within two days thereafter the despatch was sent back by way of Italy and Antwerp.

The 'brute' amongst the army in Spain is that they are bound for Scotland, and perhaps some commandement given to them in Flanders to make that voyage. I wrote not what great occasion moves our Lordes in Scotland to desier them, but I doubt nocht who is busiest to have them sall soonest tyere on them.¹⁰⁴⁹

¹⁰⁴⁵ Elizabeth, *Letters*, p. 225.

¹⁰⁴⁶ PRO, 'Promise by Henry, King of France, to maintain friendship with Queen Elizabeth in consideration of the aid given by her against the King of Spain,' 29 Aug. 1593, E 30/1264.

¹⁰⁴⁷ *CSP Scot.*, xi, p. 166.

¹⁰⁴⁸ *ibid.*, xi, pp. 245-7.

¹⁰⁴⁹ *ibid.*, xi, p. 247.

While the designs of Philip's attack on England were being discussed in England,¹⁰⁵⁰ in Scotland the three rebel earls had been banned by the government because of their alleged conspiracy with the crown of Spain to overturn the State and the Church. James VI decided to forfeit their titles, and convoked a session of Parliament with this specific purpose, held at the end of May 1594. As few of the peers attended, the three earls were attainted without trial, and their arms were torn in the presence of the Parliament, according to the custom in such cases. However, the ministers considered the reformed religion in Scotland to be in danger while these Catholic peers were protected and favoured in the north. In fact, Sempill's intelligencers in Scotland, such as Sir Walter Lindsay of Balgavies, were informing of James's dislike for the ministers of the Church, claiming that his obedience was due to his fear of their great power and authority, supported by Elizabeth.¹⁰⁵¹

James's supposed secret Catholicism needed to be proved false by those who supported the Spanish candidature to the English throne, and who better to fulfil this task than Persons. Persons published his famous book on the succession to the English throne in 1594. The redaction of this book must have been very rapid, because it was not more than an extension of a memorial that the Jesuit had presented years before to Philip II referring to his rights to the English crown.¹⁰⁵² The original title of the book, that Persons published under the pseudonym of Doleman, was: *A Conference about the Next Svccession to the Crowne of Ingland, divided into tvvo partes...VVhere vnto is added a nev & perfect arbor or genealogie*. The work, printed in St. Omer, was dedicated to the earl of Essex.

The book, firstly, offered religious and historical reasons to demonstrate the right of the people to change the direct line of the succession by 'fair reasons.' Secondly, a genealogical study of the different aspirants to the English crown concluded that the *Infanta* Isabel Clara Eugenia of Spain, being Catholic and descendant of John of Gaunt, was the most suitable successor for the throne, after Elizabeth.¹⁰⁵³ Persons

¹⁰⁵⁰ PRO, 'Discourse on designs of the King of Spain, and reply; with discourse about attack on England,' 1593, SP 94/4.

¹⁰⁵¹ SCA, 'Relacion del Estado del Reyno de Escocia, en lo tocante a nuestra religion Catolica. Este año del Señor de mil y quinientos y noventa y quatro,' CA4/1/20; W.J. Anderson correctly attributed this sheet to Sir Walter Lindsay. Forbes-Leith, *Narratives*, app., p. 351.

¹⁰⁵² See Knox, *Letters and Memorials of Cardinal Allen*, ii, p. 282n.

¹⁰⁵³ Eguiluz, *Persons*, p. 230.

wrote about James's aspiration to the English crown: 'I confess, I have not found very many in England to favour his claim.'¹⁰⁵⁴ He also eliminated the candidature of Lady Arbella, and the native aspirants, finally supporting the House of Portugal.¹⁰⁵⁵

Federico Eguiluz has explained how this book caused a strong commotion in the papal circles, because Doctor William Gifford and Charles Paget got a copy through a bribe, by the petition of the nuncio of Malvasia. Gifford translated the book from English into Latin and sent it to the nuncio with a letter full of harsh criticism. In his letter, Gifford accused Persons of trying to transform England into a Spanish province, adding that the work was disliked not only by the Scottish nobility but also by a great portion of the English.¹⁰⁵⁶ This was a very strange claim, when the work was not published until a year later.¹⁰⁵⁷

A year later, 15 June 1595, Doctor William Gifford wrote in a letter to Thomas Throckmorton that 'he had received [William Gifford] from 104 [Spain] the book of 62 [Persons] about the rights of the King of Spain, corrected by Persons. The first part has been steeled from the one from Reynolds; the second exposes all the rights, but refuse any, specially the ones of the King of Scotland.'¹⁰⁵⁸

A memorial titled 'Informacion de las cosas y personas de Ynglaterra en quanto apertenece al gobierno de Flandes, 1594' and directed, to the archduke Ernest – governor of the Low Countries – explained the situation of the succession to the English throne, in an Isle divided in three completely opposing religious opinions: Protestants, Puritans and Catholics. The document affirmed that the 'heretics' themselves were divided about the succession to the English throne. There were supporters of four different aspirants: 'Lady Arabella, the count of Huntington, the count of Darby and the eldest son of the count of Harford,' all of this without counting the diverse aspirants more or less declared outside of the kingdom, most

¹⁰⁵⁴ R. Persons, *A Conference abovt the Next Svccession to the Crowne of Inghland, divided into tvvo partes...VVhere vnto is added a nev & perfect arbor or genealogie* (St. Omer, 1594), p. 109.

¹⁰⁵⁵ Eguiluz, *Persons*, p. 109.

¹⁰⁵⁶ L. Hicks, 'Father Robert Persons and the Book of Succession,' *Recusant History*, iv (1957), p. 107.

¹⁰⁵⁷ Robert Beale wrote: 'I hear of late a vile book has been printed in English in a strange pretence from John of Gaunt upon the King of Spain. I hear it is dedicated to the earl of Essex, of intent surely to bring him in jealousy and disgrace.' Robert Beale to Sir Robert Sydney, 25 Sept. 1595. HMC *Sidney*, ii, pp. 164-5.

¹⁰⁵⁸ *CSP Dom.*, iv, pp. 54-6.

prominently being James VI. Thus, the major interest of the heretics was to try to instigate some kind of bad feelings and enmities among the other kingdoms near England: France, Flanders and Scotland. It was affirmed that the English emissaries, with the pretext of treating for peace, dealt with other secret affairs, such as the assassination of don Juan de Austria and were to ask the English, Irish and Scottish discontents to abandon the service of His Highness in Flanders as they were committing treason.¹⁰⁵⁹

The Pope replied to these reports by sending the Gordon, Crichton and George Sampiretti – the Pope’s legate – to Scotland with ‘a large sum of money which he [Sampiretti] was to give the King of Scotland, promising him a monthly allowance of ten thousand ducats on condition of his protection to the Catholics.’ Once in Scotland they met with the bishop of Dunblane.¹⁰⁶⁰

Peter Shearman demonstrated that the Scottish Jesuit Father Alexander McQuhirrie also carried another copy of this papal commission to Scotland. The Jesuit arrived in Scotland on 16 July 1594. He had come from Calais in a ship called the ‘Esperance’ that landed at Aberdeen with a cargo of papal gold and letters.¹⁰⁶¹ Upon arrival, he met briefly with Sampiretti in the Tollbooth of Aberdeen.¹⁰⁶² Peter Shearman offered an account of this trip to Aberdeen in a letter that McQuhirrie had written to the General of the Jesuits on 10 October 1608. In the document, the Jesuit Father claimed that ‘the papal subsidy which enabled the Catholic earls to undertake the campaign which culminated in the victory of Balrinnes or Glenlivat.’¹⁰⁶³

At the same time, a second Jesuit went to Scotland carrying a commission of Philip II. He was the young English priest John Cecil, chosen by Persons, and was accompanied by the Sergeant Major Pozas. His task was also to inform the Spanish

¹⁰⁵⁹ ‘A memorial for the archduke Ernest, governor of the Low Countries, regarding English persons and affairs in their relation to the government of Flanders, 1594,’ Westminster X 871^a, printed in Knox, *Records*, ii, p. 402; id., *The First and Second Douay Diaries, Appendix of Unpublished Documents*, ibid., ii, pp. 401-8.

¹⁰⁶⁰ SCA, Lord Walter Lindsay of Balgaries, ‘Relación del Estado del Reyno de Escocia en lo tocante a nuestra Religión Católica,’ 1594, CA4/1/20; Forbes-Leith, *Narratives*, p. 222.

¹⁰⁶¹ Shearman, ‘Father Alexander McQuhirrie,’ p. 22; N. Maclean-Bristol, *Murder under Trust: the crimes and death of Sir Lachlan Mor Maclean of Duart, 1558-1598* (East Linton, 1999), p. 124.

¹⁰⁶² Shearman, ‘Father Alexander McQuhirrie,’ p. 22.

¹⁰⁶³ Arch. S.J. Roman. Angl. 31, II. 147-50 printed in ibid., p. 22.

King of the disposition and strength of the Catholic nobility of Scotland. Cecil and Pozas were supposed to remain quiet in the realm until either they were advised to move or Elizabeth died. However, the Sergeant, exceeding his authority, prematurely asked the nobility to revolt, assuring them that in less than three months money and weapons would be sent from Spain and the Low Countries. In a contemporary letter, it was explained that:

La otra el año de [15]93 quando el sargento Pozas y Juan Sicilio clerigo yngles les fueron con comision de dicha mag[esta]d dirigidos a los mismos catolicos yles hizieron tomar las armas con promesa de que procurarian que dentro de tres meses se les enviasen 3000 escudos y armas para 100 hombres, en confianza de lo qual tomaron las armas y ganaron una batalla contra los herejes y el estandarte del rey siendo general dellos el donde de Argil que aora esta en Flandes.¹⁰⁶⁴

As a matter of fact, the arrival of the Jesuits and the presence of Pozas and Cecil in the realm provoked fears of a new plot in the minds of the ministers. Father Sampiretti was arrested and imprisoned; the money and letter he carried for James VI seized. The three Catholic earls – Huntly, Errol, and Angus – joined forces and went to rescue the Pope’s legate. James, instigated by the ministers, sent Archibald Campbell, 6th earl of Argyll – Huntly’s ancient enemy, a nineteen-year-old man on Elizabeth’s payroll – with an army against the rebel earls.¹⁰⁶⁵ In August, Huntly and Errol wrote to Philip II requesting military support. However, Spain could not afford to send an army, because it was at war with France and the Netherlands.¹⁰⁶⁶

On 27 September 1594, Argyll, having collected a force of 600 men, was joined by John Stewart, earl of Atholl,¹⁰⁶⁷ as well as Sir Lachlan Mor MacLean, who had at this time been forfeited of his titles and lands.¹⁰⁶⁸ On hearing of Argyll’s approach, Errol joined Huntly at Strathbogie, amassing an army of a mere 1,500 men. Huntly’s forces arrived at Auchindoun on the same day that Argyll reached Drummond. Huntly

¹⁰⁶⁴ ‘The other [rebellion], [took place in] the year of [15]93, when the sergeant Pozas and the English priest Juan Sicilio [John Cecil] went with commission of the said Majesty [Philip II] directed to the same Catholics [Scottish Catholic nobility] and they made them take arms with promises that they would try that in three months 3,000 crowns and weapons for 100 men would be sent to them, in confidence of which they took arms and gained a battle against the heretics and the standard of the King [of Scotland], being general of them the earl of Argyl[l]; who is now in Flanders.’ SCA, ‘Clase de papeles del Coronel Sempill,’ 15 Oct. 1620, CA4/3/13.

¹⁰⁶⁵ Calderwood, *History*, v, pp. 348-53.

¹⁰⁶⁶ Maclean-Bristol, *Murder under Trust*, p. 124.

¹⁰⁶⁷ Moysie, *Memoirs*, pp. 188-20.

¹⁰⁶⁸ Maclean-Bristol, *Murder under Trust*, p. 198.

received intelligence that Argyll was descending from the mountains to the lowlands and resolved to attack Argyll before he joined forces with Lord Forbes, who was waiting for his army in the lowlands. On the other hand, the earl of Argyll had no idea that the earls of Huntly and Errol would attack him with such an inferior force. Argyll had orders to wait until James, who had promised to join him with a force, should arrive. Argyll disposed his army on the slope of a hill, between Glenlivet and Glenrinnies.

Huntly advanced up the hill, starting what would be denominated by some writers as ‘the battle of Glenlivet,’ and by others as ‘the battle of Altchonlachan.’ Despite Errol receiving two wounds, the Catholic earls won the battle. Nevertheless, very shortly afterwards, James VI advanced up to their position, and confronted with the prospect of treasonably bearing arms against their monarch, they surrendered with no resistance.¹⁰⁶⁹ The rebels saw themselves forced to conciliate with King James, except Huntly and Errol who, with James’s promise that their property should be safe and no injury would be done to their followers and clansmen, left for Germany in April 1595.¹⁰⁷⁰

It was the last concerted protest by magnates during James’s reign. Bothwell, having been excommunicated by the Presbytery of Edinburgh in February 1595, left Scotland that April. For the first time, James’s rule was not threatened by his two main rivals: his audacious cousin and the Catholic earls. This demonstrated that the system of a strong and professional administration, erected by King James’s political tutor, Maitland, had not only stood the test, but had also laid the foundation for the ‘despotism’ – perhaps better described as state power – which was to characterise the rule of the government of Scotland in the seventeenth century. In fact, law and order significantly increased, even in the Highlands. There is no doubt that James, now in his thirtieth year, was confident of his own abilities at what he was to call ‘kingcraft.’¹⁰⁷¹

¹⁰⁶⁹ BNM, ‘Noticias de la derrota de los rebeldes escoceses,’ MS 2396, fo. 463.

¹⁰⁷⁰ *RPC Scot.*, v, p. 217.

¹⁰⁷¹ Lee, *Great Britain’s Solomon*, pp. 74-6; M. Lee, *John Maitland of Thirlestane and the Foundation of the Stewart Despotism in Scotland* (Chicago, 1959), pp. 3, 291-2.

The Catholic nobility, with their leaders mostly now in exile, were forced to submit to James, but they had not totally surrendered to him. They secretly informed Sempill that they would be ready for ‘whatever the Spanish King wanted.’ Sempill reported this to Philip II, however, Philip, ‘being misinformed by English priests in Spain, did not reply to their offers.’ Sempill decided to take the money that years before had given to Robert Bruce – 5,040 crowns – and handed the money to the Spanish King’s officials in Flanders.¹⁰⁷²

The year 1595 carried a drastic change in the Spanish diplomatic action. With Huntly, Errol and Angus exiled in the Continent for their roles in the uprising of 1594, Sempill thought it would be safer to use the missionaries that Philip supported as agents in the mission in Scotland.¹⁰⁷³

The Spaniards were not the only ones that used the Jesuits as intelligencers. In the spring of 1595, James VI was accused of sending a secret commission with Crichton and Gordon to the Pope. In this commission, the Jesuits were to express James’s intention to restore the Catholic religion in Scotland.¹⁰⁷⁴ On 12 June 1595, Thomas Phelippes sent Lord Burghley a deciphered letter from Doctor William Gifford to Thomas Throckmorton. Phelippes commented in a dispatch with the said seized letter:

I ground myself on other intelligence of proceedings beyond seas. I have good warrant for my conceit of 73 [Doctor William Gifford]. The ground of the faction abroad is that the Pope has put some of the English in good hope of the King of Scots, if he will give liberty of conscience; some, as Parsons, Holt, Owen, & c., second the Spaniard’s designs, which permit no mention of it. Yet the taking the money from the King of Spain, supposed to have come from the King of Spain, but discovered to be from the Pope makes me think that by 73 is meant the King of Scots, especially as he says his wife is reconciled [with the Catholic Church].¹⁰⁷⁵

This was not as simple as Phelippes had commented: as in Rome the appointment of a new cardinal was being discussed, and Fathers Cassano, Tommaso de Vio – better known as Cajetan – and Persons were in the run for the title. As we already know, Persons was supporting the Spanish claim to the English throne. Owen and Cassano believed in the conversion of England to Catholicism under James VI, but Owen did

¹⁰⁷² SCA, ‘Clase de papeles del Coronel Sempill,’ 15 Oct. 1620, CA4/3/13, fos. 1-2.

¹⁰⁷³ *ibid.*, fo. 2.

¹⁰⁷⁴ See BL, ‘Reference to a secret embassy from James VI to the Pope,’ 1595, Stowe MS 166, fo. 289.

¹⁰⁷⁵ *CSP Dom.*, iv, p. 54; Eguiluz, *Persons*, pp. 248-9.

not think that Cassano would be right for the position. Fathers Cajetan and Persons had more chances to be elected, but they wanted to make sure that the dignity would not go to a Scottish supporter.¹⁰⁷⁶

Meanwhile, Philip II was busy levying troops to be sent under the command of Juan Fernández de Velasco, constable of Castile, to conquer southern France.¹⁰⁷⁷ However, when in March 1595 news was received that Elizabeth was preparing a major expedition against the Spanish empire, Philip decided to withdraw his forces from Brittany and gave orders to ready an impressive armada consisting of six light galleons, three flyboats, two zebras, and fifteen naos.¹⁰⁷⁸ Immediately, English agents reported the Spanish preparations for an imminent invasion of the British Isles. Thus, on 22 August 1595, Thomas Lake wrote in a letter to Sir Robert Sydney that ‘in expectation of being attempted next year either directly or by way of Scotland, where there is great practice, not altogether by the Kings consent for the main drift, but yet not without connivence to worke some turnes with us. We ground our apprehension on knowledge of preparations in Spain far greater than in the year [15]88, and on advertisements of their purpose.’ Lake, commenting that some alleged the impossibility of the return of the Spanish fleet in such a short time, recommended to strengthen the council.¹⁰⁷⁹

However once again, the danger was to come, not from Scotland, but from Ireland. Hugh O’Neill and Hugh O’Donnell had opened lines of communication with Spain, and found Philip willing to support the rebellion led by Tyrone.¹⁰⁸⁰ Thus, on 25 August 1595, Robert Beale informed Sir Robert Sydney that Philip II was preparing a fleet for Ireland. The Spanish support would not arrive until 1596, but the political instability of Scotland worried Elizabeth, since a rebellion in Ireland could be followed by others in Scotland. ‘In Scotland,’ Thomas Lake reported, ‘there has been a work to get James VI out of the custody of the earl of Mar by the Queen of England and the Chancellor.’ This had provoked James’s displeasure against the Chancellor

¹⁰⁷⁶ *CSP Dom.*, iv, pp. 54-6.

¹⁰⁷⁷ BL, ‘Spanish levy of troops for France,’ 22 June 1595, Stowe MS 166, fo. 241; BL, ‘Inform on the Spanish affairs,’ 9 July 1595, Stowe MS 166, fo. 248.

¹⁰⁷⁸ Tenace, ‘the Spanish intervention in Brittany,’ pp. 365, 378-9.

¹⁰⁷⁹ Thomas Lake to Sir Robert Sydney, 22 Aug. 1595. HMC *Sidney*, ii, pp. 159-60.

¹⁰⁸⁰ H. Morgan, ‘British Policies before the British State,’ in B. Bradshaw, *The British Problem, c. 1534-1707* (Basingstoke, 1996), pp. 85-6.

and Elizabeth,¹⁰⁸¹ which was proved when, on 2 October, Rowland Whyte confirmed to Sir Robert Sydney that the secretary of James VI's cabinet was in London to see Elizabeth. His mission was to let Elizabeth know how unable James was to resist 'the great force of the common ennemy, without the ayde of her Majestie, which he craves may be speedily and royally, to prevent the devises of many that persuade hym to harken to a peace between hym and the Spaniard, which by becessity he wilbe forced unto, if his neighbours, especially her Majestie, do not roially assist hym.' Lonebye dined with the earl of Essex, and had audience with the Queen in the late afternoon.¹⁰⁸²

Elizabeth's reply did not come until January 1596, when Elizabeth sent Robert Bowes as her special ambassador to Scotland with two letters. One was for James and the other for James's wife, Queen Anne of Denmark, dated 28 January. In her letter to James, Elizabeth affirmed that, according to reliable reports, Spain was again preparing to invade England. Thus, she suggests James issue a proclamation to resist any attack. In her own words:

I could not have left my pen so long dry, but would have filled it to you with matter full of truth, and memorials of my cares, which never are at rest for your best avail, and meant to warn you of such occurrence as other nations afford me; especially, such as might touch the safety of our countries, and honours of ourselves. Although I do not doubt, as now I do perceive, that you should think them now overstale for news, being by good espials not made ignorant of our enemies' drifts, whose scope have their bounds while either lives in reign, but the ever guider of best actions, and readiest ruiner of wicked acts, will, I doubt not, cool their heat, abate their pride, and confound their force.¹⁰⁸³

In April, Elizabeth gave instructions to the earl of Essex and the Lord Admiral Howard to command an expedition against Spain: 'our first intentione for make inge readye of our Navye to be saile to the seas was upon common reportes made, that the king of Spayne had made and was making readye a greater navye to come to the seas then was made in [15]88, and tyat [try to take] our realme of England and with partner thereof to give aude to our Rebels in Ireland.' The reports said that the Spanish forces would land the following May, coming from Ireland and not Scotland.¹⁰⁸⁴

¹⁰⁸¹ Thomas Lake to Sir Robert Sydney, 1 Oct. 1595. *ibid.*, ii, p. 168.

¹⁰⁸² *ibid.*, ii, p. 169.

¹⁰⁸³ Elizabeth, *Letters*, pp. 239-40.

¹⁰⁸⁴ BL, 'Advertisements from Ireland,' 1596, Eg. MS 2,541, i, fo. 401.

James VI finally did as Elizabeth had asked of him and called for his people and country to resist a Spanish invasion, as Elizabeth had asked of him, on 4 May 1596.¹⁰⁸⁵ This action must finally have convinced Philip to use Ireland instead of Scotland for his plans. Just when Tyrone was ready to make peace with Elizabeth, several Spanish agents arrived promising military and financial aid for the rebellion.¹⁰⁸⁶ Ireland was emerging as the springboard for the Spanish intervention in the British Isles.

Philip had some success in prolonging the Irish rebellion, but Elizabeth took her revenge swiftly. She opened negotiations with France to establish an anti-Spanish league; the subsequent treaty was signed at Greenwich on 14 May¹⁰⁸⁷ and, two months later, a large fleet captured Cadiz, holding it for two weeks.¹⁰⁸⁸

However, when it seemed that the Scottish frontier was secure, John Ogilvy of Powrie, passed from Rome to Toledo to see Philip claiming that he was an agent of James VI.¹⁰⁸⁹ Ogilvy had left Scotland for Flanders, where he met the Spanish minister of War, don Esteban de Ibarra. Ogilvy confessed to Ibarra that he had been sent by James to gain the favour of the Pope against Philip. However, during Ogilvy's stay in Flanders, Ibarra, knowing that he was a Catholic, accorded with him that Ogilvy would deal the opposite when in Italy for a salary of 1,000 ducats per month.¹⁰⁹⁰

Before departing for Italy, Ogilvy met with Charles Paget and Doctor William Gifford, the main Catholic supporters of the Scottish succession to the English throne.¹⁰⁹¹ The bearer reached Rome before October and presented the commission.¹⁰⁹² Supposedly, James VI asked the Pope for a salary of 2,000 gold

¹⁰⁸⁵ BL, letter of James VI, 4 May 1596, Add. MS 48,049, fo. 331.

¹⁰⁸⁶ Parker, *The Grand Strategy*, p. 278.

¹⁰⁸⁷ See BL, 'Anglo-Gallica, or negotiations and treaties between England and France; 1359, 1525-1654,' Stowe MS 132, i, fo. 300; BL, 'Discours pour faire condeseendre la Royne d'Angleterre a une Ligue...contre le Roy d'Espagne,' Stowe MS 132, i, fo. 115; PRO, 'Treaty of alliance between England and France against the King of Spain,' 14 May 1596, E 30/1166.

¹⁰⁸⁸ Parker, *The Grand Strategy*, p. 278.

¹⁰⁸⁹ Mackie, 'A Secret Agent of James VI,' pp. 384-6; Ward, 'James VI and the Papacy,' p. 250.

¹⁰⁹⁰ T.G. Law, *Documents Illustrating Catholic Policy in the Reign of James VI, 1596, 1598* (Edinburgh, 1893), pp. 30-1.

¹⁰⁹¹ *ibid.*, p. 5.

¹⁰⁹² *ibid.*, p. 6.

crowns per month to pay his troops; a sum that would be raised to 4,000 when he would declare himself Catholic, which would be used to pay the war against England. Finally, James requested the Pope to support his succession to the throne of England, excommunicating all others who dared to be candidates.¹⁰⁹³

However, the anti-Spanish offers that Ogilvy was proposing to the Pope reached the ears of the duke of Sessa, the Spanish ambassador to Rome. A meeting took place between Ogilvy and Sessa. Later, Ogilvy also met Father Cecil, to whom he confessed of his dealings with Esteban de Ibarra. The Scottish commissioner claimed that they had planned the transportation of Prince Henry, James VI's first son, and discussed the availability of some strongholds in Scotland for Spain. However Ogilvy, subsequently, claimed that Elizabeth had a plan to convince the King of France to abandon his wife and to marry Lady Arbella Stewart, who would inherit the English crown. In addition, he claimed that Elizabeth's plan even included her conversion to Catholicism. The Spanish ambassador, knowing that these affirmations were incoherent, recommended Ogilvy to go to the Spanish court, and gave him a chain of gold.¹⁰⁹⁴

Thomas Law has narrated how Sessa decided to send Cecil to accompany the Scottish bearer to try to find out the truth. They arrived at Madrid in May 1596. Immediately, Ogilvy presented his memorials to Philip II; which claimed that James intended to convert himself and his country to Catholicism, starting a confederation with Philip and the Pope against Elizabeth.¹⁰⁹⁵ As it was supposed in a diplomatic mission, Ogilvy showed a letter of credential signed by James to Philip, and then handed over the memorials.¹⁰⁹⁶

Phelippes in his work titled 'Notes out of Cecil's book against Creighton,' narrated how a representative of James VI went to Spain to try to gain Philip's support for Scotland. Phelippes commented that John Cecil's book had:

¹⁰⁹³ In this petition, James VI of Scotland asked the Pope to appoint Doctor Lewis, the bishop of Cassano, as cardinal in succession to Allen. *ibid.*, pp. 6-7.

¹⁰⁹⁴ *ibid.*, pp. 7-8.

¹⁰⁹⁵ *ibid.*, pp. 3, 8, 21; there are copies of these memorials in SCA, 'Document concerning [the] negotiations regarding [the] Treaty with Rome, Spain, etc.,' 1596, CA4/1/8.

¹⁰⁹⁶ Law, *Documents Illustrating Catholic Policy*, p. 21; SCA, 'Document concerning [the] negotiations regarding [the] Treaty with Rome, Spain, etc.,' 1596, CA4/1/8.

two parts, a detection of his forgeries and a correction of his follies, Pory Ogilvy, coming with a commission from the King of Scots to conclude an alliance with the King of Spain, challenged Col[onel] Simple, Parsons, Creswell, Sir Father Englefield, and Cecil, to show if they knew any evil opinion formed of the King of Scots by the Catholics, as he could remove it...Father Creighton has had the whole plotting of the invasions; the seminaries had not been but for Cecil's encouragement of Card[inal] Allen and Father Parsons in that work.¹⁰⁹⁷

Amongst Sempill's papers, there is a document concerning the negotiations regarding a treaty with Rome and Spain, which was instigated by Secretary Cecil to discover what was going on in these different courts against Elizabeth, dated of 25 June 1596.¹⁰⁹⁸ The first part of such an important document was 'the reasons that move the King of Scotland at this thyme to reconcile hymself to the see apostholike to seeke to confederation of Spagnie et proposed by his comisary the Baron Pury to his majesty.' The most important points can be summarised as follows: firstly, the desire he had to revenge his mother's death, by public hanging (actually, she was beheaded); the most grave indignity and offence to his royal person; the ban of any relative of Mary Queen of Scots in the acts of succession to inherit the throne of England; James's mistrust of Elizabeth for her promises sent with Asheby before the Armada, but were afterwards denied, declaring that Asheby had dealt further than he had transgressed in his commission. And finally, the favour showed by the English to Bothwell, his rival and rebel, aiding him publicly with men and money.

The second part of the document was the 'difficulties that in Rome were offered and in the letters and relations of the fathers and Scots were found against the person of the commissar of the king against the person of the king himself and Sessa's opinion about this.' Firstly, Ogilvy had stayed in England for three months, without leaving, before he reached Spain with his supposed commission. During this time, he treated with Walsingham and received 300 crowns in taken of friendship. Secondly, he did not want to show his commission to Sessa or any other that knew or had contacts in Scotland. Obviously, the Pope and Italian potentates did not trust any commission that was alleged to have come from James VI; he was not a Catholic king and there were many in Scotland who knew how to fake the signature and stamp of the king. Some letters supposedly signed by James were directed to the bishop of Cassano, Crichton

¹⁰⁹⁷ *CSP Dom.*, iv, p. 338.

¹⁰⁹⁸ SCA, 'Document concerning [the] negotiations regarding [the] Treaty with Rome, Spain, etc.,' 1596, CA4/1/8; Law, *Documents Illustrating Catholic Policy*, pp. 21-30.

and Charles Plaget and others to alienate them from the affection of Spain. Finally, a private of the king called Thomas Heslyn, married to Ogilvy's sister, had procured letters and commissions declaring that James did not know anything about Ogilvy's mission.¹⁰⁹⁹ A more formal declaration by James about this matter came nearly two years later, on 12 October 1598, when Lord Robert Sempill, who was sent to Spain as ambassador from James VI to Philip III, declared: 'heare he finde cum hur with falce commissinis from zour magesti and last ye land of Puriogilvie guila lies offerit sik thingis to Your Ma[jesty].'¹¹⁰⁰

In addition, Ogilvy's behaviour in the Spanish court provoked some suspicions. Sessa had been informed that Ogilvy had already been in Italy, treating with the Venetians or the duke of Florence. Moreover, after that, Ogilvy had had an interview with the cardinal de Toledo and Father Aldebrandino; but Ogilvy denied it. In addition, he refused to show his commission and instructions to any person apart from the ministers in secret meetings.

Nevertheless, in case the mission of Ogilvy by James VI were true, there were still many difficulties that the Catholics had with James's personality, which was the third part of the document. Obviously, they wanted to know how this 'miraculous' conversion of James had taken place. It was obvious that it did not come from reading the Catholic books that priests had carried to Scotland. There were many reasons why the Catholics did not trust James's good intentions:

1. That he gave his word to the Earls of Angus [Douglas, William, 9th earl of], Baron of Fentry [David Graham of Fintry] and Ladiland [Hugh Barclay of Ladyland], not to go against them because of the religion, by he gave a royal cedula to cut their heads, but the Baron of Fentry [David Graham of Fintry]¹¹⁰¹ and the others escaped from the castle of Edinburgh saving their lives.
2. That he sent the father Jacobo Gordonio [Father James Gordon] a letter to ask for help for the Pope, coming back this father with a papal commissary [George Sampiretti] with letters and money that the Pope sent to the said king, money that he used to make the war against the catholics.¹¹⁰²
3. that he attacked the catholics in glenlivet.¹¹⁰³

¹⁰⁹⁹ SCA, 'Document concerning negotiations regarding treaty with Rome, Spain, etc.,' 1596, CA4/1/8.

¹¹⁰⁰ NLS, 'Instructiones of Robert Lord Sempill,' ADV MS 31.1.10, xxvii, no. 7.

¹¹⁰¹ This was obviously a mistake. David Graham of Fintry was executed on 15 February 1593. See p. 171 of this thesis.

¹¹⁰² SCA, 'Relación del Estado del Reyno de Escocia en lo tocante a nuestra Religión Católica,' by Lord Walter Lindsay of Balgaries, 1594, CA4/1/20; Forbes-Leith, *Narratives*, p. 222.

¹¹⁰³ Shearman, 'Father Alexander McQuhirrie,' p. 22.

4. Sending there the colonel symple [Colonel William Sempil], the bishop of Dumblane [William Chisholm], and the father Guillermo [William] Holt to negotiate about his wellbeing and having protection he had to escape for their lives.
5. He sent a letter to the Queen of England referring the death of his mother that starts with 'mortui' not 'morden'
6. he made all the nobility swear to revenge the death of his mother and confiscated the properties of those how tried to carried the revenge out.
7. He called the Catholics to meet in the village of Johnstones with him, but instead he confiscated their properties.
8. that his subjects and Jesuit fathers thinks that he is cruel, infidel, inconstant and perverse, he does not care about his word and signature, his honour and reputation
9. they were suspicious that the king only wants to win some time.
10. that the thing that he wants is the succession to the English throne.¹¹⁰⁴

The fourth part was Sessa's opinion on this matter. Sessa believed that Ogilvy's commission had really been comanded by King James VI. Thus, the duke suggested that the best thing to do was to send money to the Catholic nobles, and not to James, as it was promised to them and to keep this envoy busy in Italy. He also commented that any communication and business with Scotland should go through the hands of Fathers Persons and Creswell.

Sempill was of the same opinion: only when the priests and Catholic nobles in Scotland would report that James was a Catholic, should Philip and the Pope treat with James; 'the facts and not the words' show loyalty. He declared that the earls of Huntly and Errol were ready, waiting, and the earl of Angus – using as bearer Crichton in Flanders – and the others had written to Persons. They asked for 1,200 men to be sent to Scotland. Surprisingly, Colonel Sempill declared that 'la diferencia entre los religiosos yngleses y escoceses que los de escocia miran primero y principalmente al estado que el derecho de su rey no sea perjudicado y despues a la religion y despues al estado en orden a ella.'¹¹⁰⁵

Ogilvy was not able to find the correspondence and warm welcome that he was looking for in the Spanish court, and claimed that Philip did not want to help James. Thus, he suggested that James should look for a league against Philip and the Catholics, and should seek for money and aid from Elizabeth. In such a moment of

¹¹⁰⁴ SCA, 'Document concerning [the] negotiations regarding [the] Treaty with Rome, Spain, etc.,' 1596, CA4/1/8.

¹¹⁰⁵ 'The difference between the English and Scottish priests [is] that the Scots look first and principally for the estate of the rights of their king not to be damaged and later to the religion, and then to the state in order to it [religion].' SCA, 'Document concerning [the] negotiations regarding [the] Treaty with Rome, Spain, etc.,' 1596, CA4/1/8, fos. 1-2.

anger, Ogilvy assured that the favour that James had showed the Catholics when he was being harrassed by Bothwell, was because the heretic ministers supported Bothwell.¹¹⁰⁶

A Portuguese man was appointed to go to Scotland with Ogilvy, at to his own request. However, Ogilvy changed his mind and left Madrid without his companion to go to Valencia and Barcelona. He also refused a chain of gold valued at 500 ducats that Francisco de Idiaquez, Philip II's secretary, gave him by Philip's order. Some days later, don Esteban de Ibarra, Philip's Secretary of War, arrived at the Spanish court with documents concerning Ogilvy. These documents concerning his commission proved that what had been treated in Madrid was very different from what Ogilvy had told Ibarra in Flanders.¹¹⁰⁷ Ibarra's declaration and documents provoked Ogilvy's imprisonment in the prison of Barcelona, until it was ascertained if he had really been sent by James.¹¹⁰⁸ Ogilvy was still in prison in Barcelona in the summer of 1598, when his brother-in-law went to Spain to intercede for him. By December 1600, Ogilvy was back in Scotland, and on Sir Robert Cecil's payroll. This affair was closely followed in England, and Elizabeth ordered Bowes to go to Scotland to interrogate James about this matter, who subsequently denied his involvement in this matter.¹¹⁰⁹

Philip II had not believed Ogilvy, nor the memorials that he carried about James's supposed good intentions, probably because of the representation by Colonel Sempill concerning this affair. Sempill doubted James's good intentions, declaring that on one hand he tried to convince the Catholics, particularly in Rome and Spain, that he was one of them, and on the other hand, he was doing the same with the Protestants in England, Scotland and Ireland. According to Sempill, this was to gain time before Elizabeth's death.¹¹¹⁰

¹¹⁰⁶ *ibid.*, fo. 2.

¹¹⁰⁷ Law, *Documents Illustrating Catholic Policy*, pp. 30-1.

¹¹⁰⁸ *ibid.*, pp. 4, 30.

¹¹⁰⁹ *ibid.*, p. 9.

¹¹¹⁰ SCA, 'Representation made by the Colonel Semple to Philip II of Spain concerning the affairs of Scotland,' 1598, CA4/1/10.

Thus, Philip decided to start the preparations for what was to become his last expedition to *la Perfida Albion*. Everything seemed ready for war, as a memorandum from Venice, dated 28 June 1596, confirmed:

By letter from Spaine certaine advise of the King's [Philip II's] greevous indisposition both of an age and the goute, and yett that there was charge given the sea Armie should sett saile with the first wind towards Calais. That the king was Marvelouslie distracted and discontented with the Scot[tis] King for declaring himselfe nowe reallie and openlie to be devoted wholie to the Queen of England and to rune firmlie her course.¹¹¹¹

Everything seemed ready for the war with the final acceptance by the States General of the United Provinces of the treaty of alliance between England and France against Philip.¹¹¹² Meanwhile, in the English Parliament they discussed sending a fleet to the coast of Spain.¹¹¹³

Thus, in the summer of 1596, Sempill was called to the Spanish court to collaborate with don Juan de Idiaquez, the Spanish Secretary of State, to plan the war against England. In a letter dated from the early seventeenth century, Colonel Sempill explained to Philip III his work for the former his father in the summer of 1596.

- Uno que se armassen quarenta navios para de continuo los veinte dellos estuviessen para defensa de la costa de españa y carerar de Indias y los otros veinte ofensivos en la mar del setentrio detras de yrlanda para acortar los comercios y pesquerías de los enemigos en el septentrion a que se dio principio a los 12 galeones que llamaron los apostoles.
- Diversion de armas contra englaterra por medio de onel y odonel y macdonal de las yslas hebreas de scosia padres de los conde de teron y terconel y de ancreen de agora que quando mi comission en escosia les hise juntarse en irlanda contra los engleses.
- Tercero conmutar el comercio de españa que tenian ingleses y rebeldes en ansiaticos como antiguamente al principio de la guerra de flanders solian ser.
- Quarto impedir el rey Jacobo a reynar en englaterra que la nobleça catolica continuadamente desde el año de 1594 ofrecian hazer ya este fin para ponerlo en execucion, su Mag[estad] año de 96 fue servido de con achaque de darme la visita de la costa de andalucia a mi cargo despusiese de secreto lo del comercio armada y diversion de armas contra englaterra por scosia y yrlanda que por fallecimiento de su mag[estad] que fue de 98 cesso desde.¹¹¹⁴

¹¹¹¹ NLS, 'News from abroad, 1595 to 1645,' ADV MS 19.1.20, fo. 11.

¹¹¹² PRO, 'Acceptance by the States General of the United Provinces of the treaty of alliance between England and France against the King of Spain concluded on 14 May last,' 31 Oct. 1596, E 30/1175.

¹¹¹³ PRO, 'Reasons for sending fleet upon coast of Spain,' SP 94/5.

¹¹¹⁴ 'One, that fourty ships were built, thus, continuously twenty of them were [employed] in the defence of the Spanish coast and the route to Indies and the other twenty, offensive, in the sea of the north behind Ireland to disturb the commerce and fishing of the enemies in the north, which gave principle to the 12 galleons that were called the apostles.

Diversion of arms against England through O'Neill [Hugh O'Neill, earl of Tyrone], O'Donnell [Rory O'Donnell, earl of Tyrconnell] and MacDonald of the Hebridean Isles of Scotland, fathers of the earls of Tyrone, Tyrconnell and of Ancrum that when my commission in Scotland would make them join in Ireland against the English.

Philip II, expecting an attack by the English fleet,¹¹¹⁵ appointed William Sempill as his supreme consul to the coast of Andalusia, because of the experience of Sempill and the trust that the Spanish King had in him. Philip wanted to prevent an attack of the English or the rebels of the Netherlands on any Spanish commerce. Thus, Sempill was in charge of supervising all other consuls set in the seaports of this southern coast of Spain.¹¹¹⁶

However, Sempill was still more interested in Scottish politics than in commerce. He had been contacted by Bothwell, who had several ambitious proposals for Philip II. Bothwell was in favour of seizing and transporting James to Spain. Sempill did not agree with this idea because it would result in the enmity of the King of Denmark. However, the second proposal of the earl, the fortification of the Isle of Orkney, was supported by Sempill, who believed that with ten or twelve ships they would be able to destroy the fisheries of the rebels. Thus, the Colonel recommended to award Bothwell a pension with which to sustain himself and to start some rebellions in the north to gain 'security in the Indies fleet, because having the war at home, [the English] would not be able to attack it.'¹¹¹⁷

In October 1596, Robert Bowes informed Cecil of a meeting that took place in Nantes between Mendoza, Hugh Barclay of Ladyland and Captain James Hackerston. They were planning an occupation of the Isle of Ailsa Craig, off the coast of Ayrshire. Firstly, it would be used to maintain a public mass on the island, and secondly,

Third, to commute the commerce of Spain that the English and rebels in Hanseatic, as in the antiquity, at the beginning of the war of Flanders, used to be.

Four, to hinder King James to rule in England, because continuously since the year of 1594 the Catholic nobility offered to accomplish this matter [and] to put it in execution. His Majesty, [in the] year of [15]96, was served to order me to visit the coast of Andalusia, disposing under my responsibility the secret of the commerce, arming and diversion of the arms against England through Scotland and Ireland which because of the death of His Majesty in [15]98 ceased.' SCA, 'Razones por saver si escosia es deseando al Rey d'España,' CA4/9/10.

¹¹¹⁵ PRO, 'Advices from Spain,' 1596, SP 94/5.

¹¹¹⁶ SCA, 'Draft memorial of Coronel William Semple to the King of Spain,' June 1631, CA4/6/5; AGS, Leg. 839; in September 1620, the King of Spain signed a 'Cédula' in which it was declared that 'Diego Ciati, Scottish and married to a Spanish woman, after the death of Thomas Gayme, English, was chosen by the Scottish merchants in Andalusia as consul of the Scottish nation in the ports of Andalucia with the same privileges and authority that his predecessor.' SCA, 'Copia de la Cédula del Consul Escoçes, Diego Ciacati,' 2 Sept. 1620, CA4/3/8; see also A.J. Loomie, *Spain and the Early Stuarts, 1585-1655* (Aldershot, 1996), pp. 181-2.

¹¹¹⁷ SCA, 'Representation made by the Colonel Semple to Philip II of Spain concerning the affairs of Scotland,' 1598, CA4/1/10.

because it would serve as shelter to any Spanish fleet as a port at their arrival in Ireland and a storehouse for the earl of Tyrone.¹¹¹⁸ MacCaffrey has explained how Spain, having planned to support Tyrone's rebellion, wanted to obtain a base in the lower Clyde estuary, and how Ladyland and other Scottish Catholics were apparently willing to be employed for this.¹¹¹⁹ Actually, this possibility deeply alarmed the English government.¹¹²⁰ However, when in early 1597 Hugh Barclay of Ladyland seized and fortified the Isle of Ailsa Craig, Andrew Knox – the minister of Paisley – put an end to this plan. Before being captured, Barclay committed suicide by throwing himself into the sea.¹¹²¹

Meanwhile, in Spain, the winter of 1597 had carried heavy frosts, which killed off all the crops;¹¹²² thus, Philip II was forced to borrow money again.¹¹²³ However, this did not stop the Spanish plans for war. The first agent reporting the great preparations in Spain for a third armada against England was Rowland Whyte, writing to Sir Robert Sydney, on 3 April 1597.¹¹²⁴ On 31 July, Sir William Browne confirmed to Sir Robert Sydney that the Spanish navy was gathering in the Groyne (La Coruña); also that Philip's fleet still lay in harbour with around 8,000 soldiers ready to embark, and the English, already at sea, still had not met any of them.¹¹²⁵ There were some delays because, the sailors of the High Seas fleet refused Philip's direct orders to sail towards England, due to his mental and physical health.¹¹²⁶ However, very soon after it was launched, the Spanish armada was defeated by a storm, even greater than that of 1588.¹¹²⁷ However, still at the end of October, the English agents were informing Sir Robert Sydney that the earl of Essex, who had recently landed in Plymouth, had not

¹¹¹⁸ PRO, 'Advertisements out of Ireland,' 1596, SP 61/12; G. Winston, *The Spanish Armadas* (London, 1972), p. 221; Morgan, *Tyrone's Rebellion*, p. 15.

¹¹¹⁹ W.T. MacCaffrey, *Elizabeth: war and politics, 1588-1603* (Princeton NJ, 1992), pp. 385-417.

¹¹²⁰ Wernham, *The Return of the Armadas: the last years of the Elizabethan war against Spain, 1595-1603* (Oxford, 1994), p. 202.

¹¹²¹ Law, *Documents Illustrating Catholic Policy*, p. 7.

¹¹²² Parker, *Philip II*, p. 180.

¹¹²³ In a letter titled 'Philip II borrows again,' it was narrated how Philip II had published a decree whereby no silver coins were to be exported from the realm. Moreover, he had 'also ordered that the *reals* [14 *reals* were equivalent to 1 crown], which before were worth thirty *maravedis* [ancient Spanish coin], are henceforward to be changed for forty *maravedis*. The King has also signed with his won hand the deed of the loan of Herr Fugger, and confirmed it by decree.' Letter from Rome, 29 Mar. 1597. Von Klarwill, *The Fugger News-Letters*, p. 226.

¹¹²⁴ Rowland Whyte to Sir Robert Sydney, 3 Apr. 1597. HMC *Sidney*, ii, p. 259.

¹¹²⁵ *ibid.*, ii, p. 289.

¹¹²⁶ Parker, *The Grand Strategy*, p. 277.

¹¹²⁷ Winston, *The Spanish Armadas*, p. 240.

been able to find the Spanish fleet, which they assumed was hovering close to the English coast, but had not yet landed. More importantly, they assured that 'the King of Spain made his son swear not to make peace with England till he had revenged their disgraces.'¹¹²⁸

Relations between Elizabeth and James were deteriorating because of the delay in the payments of his pension, but also because James was concentrating on securing his succession to the English crown. However, before that, he had needed to gain the control of his kingdom. The rebel earls had been summoned and forfeited.¹¹²⁹ However, at the beginning of 1598, James was accused of being involved in a plot to assassinate Elizabeth. The only basis of the case was the declaration of Valentine Thomas, and the accusation did not succeed.¹¹³⁰ This could potentially damage James's candidature for the English throne.¹¹³¹ The Scottish monarch decided to send a group of letters and memorials to Philip II, with his special ambassador Lord Robert Sempill, cousin of Colonel William Sempill, declaring his intention to continue in his run for English crown.¹¹³² Moreover, at the beginning of 1598, Father William Cricthon published his defence of James's claims to the English throne.¹¹³³

At the end of the month of June 1598, Philip suffered fevers that left him prostrated in bed, suffering such intense pains that made him unable to move, he washed nor change his clothes. Thus, on 16 August, the States General of the United Provinces started a negotiation with Elizabeth by which the Queen would consent to continue the war against Spain and to allow English volunteers in the Netherlands to take the oath of allegiance to the States General, on condition that the States repay her loan by instalments, and undertake to send a force to England in case of a Spanish invasion. However, Elizabeth was waiting for Philip II's death to ratify the treaty. At five in the morning of the Sunday 13 September 1598, Philip died in the monastery of the

¹¹²⁸ *ibid.*, p. 300.

¹¹²⁹ Hicks, 'Sir Robert Cecil, Father Persons and the Succession, 1600- 1601,' p. 106; see for example NLS, 'Summons against George Gordon, earl of Huntly,' ADV MS 19.1.35, fos. 1-8.

¹¹³⁰ Hicks, 'Sir Robert Cecil, Father Persons and the Succession, 1600- 1601,' p. 106.

¹¹³¹ The 'Act of Association of 1585' banned the candidature to the English throne of any person who had been involved in a plot intended to assassinate an English monarch.

¹¹³² NLS, James VI to Philip II, 12 Jan. 1598, ADV MS 31.1.10, xxvii, no. 5; see also 'Instructions for Robert Lord Sempill,' 12 Feb. 1598. *ibid.*, no. 6.

¹¹³³ T.G. Law (ed.), 'An apologie and defence of the King of Scotland,' *SHS*, xv (1893), pp. 41-64.

Escorial. He was 71 years old and his agony had lasted for 53 days. Merely a week later, the treaty between the States General and Elizabeth was ratified.¹¹³⁴

James VI did not send instructions to Robert Lord Sempill to express his sorrow for Philip II's death and present his friendship to Philip III until 1599.¹¹³⁵ Probably, the letters that this ambassador had sent in the autumn of 1598 just a month after the death of the Spanish monarch, informing of great preparations of an armada in Spain that would sail against the Isle, had caused the delay of James to send this commission to Lord Sempill.¹¹³⁶ Then, James also wrote to Colonel Sempill, asking him to support and advise Lord Sempill in his commission.¹¹³⁷

James knew that the succession of the new king to the Spanish throne meant a change in the European political scene. Philip III was more interested in hunting than in politics, an issue that he had left in the hands of his *validos* (favourites), being the principal Francisco Gómez de Sandoval, the duke of Lerma. The economic crisis and Lerma's advice, promoted a policy of no confrontation with the traditional enemy, England.¹¹³⁸ Nevertheless, James wanted to secure the Spanish recognition of his rights to the English throne.¹¹³⁹

However, Philip III's behaviour exasperated those who still believed in the holy enterprise of England. Most of them assumed the new situation, only Persons and Sempill refused to accept the friendly relations with England. Persons was the Rector

¹¹³⁴ PRO, 'Ratification by the States General of the United Provinces of a treaty with the Queen of England, dated 16 August last, by which the Queen consents to continue the war against Spain, and allow English volunteers in the Netherlands to take the oath of allegiance to the States General, on condition that the States repay by instalments her loan to them, and undertake to send a force of England in case of a Spanish invasion thereof,' 20 Sept. 1598, E 20/1174.

¹¹³⁵ SCA, 'Instruction given by King James to Robert Lord Semple, his ambassador to Philip II of Spain,' 1599, CA4/1/14.

¹¹³⁶ NLS, Robert Lord Sempill to James VI, from Madrid, 12 Oct. 1598, ADV MS 31.1.10, xxvii, no. 7; 'Brevis et sumaria enumeratio eorum quo Scotia in Hispania ablata sunt, quorque domini per libellos supplices Regi exhibitos ad Hispanis sibi restitui rogarunt.' *ibid.*, no. 12; about the Spanish preparations for war see also PRO, 'Don Jeronimo Arias de la Hoz. Details of two plotters, a Franciscan and a Jesuit who plan to come to England and kill the Queen with an infernal machine hidden in a book. Great preparations in Spain for another Armada against England, and its objectives,' [Nov.?] 1598, SP 89/3.

¹¹³⁷ SCA, 'The substance in Spanish of a commission given by James VI to Colonel Semple,' 1599, CA4/1/11.

¹¹³⁸ See P. Allen, *Philip III and the Pax Hispanica 1598-1621: the failure of grand strategy* (London, 2000).

¹¹³⁹ J.D. Mackie, 'The Secret Diplomacy of King James VI. in Italy Prior to his Accession to the

of the English College in Rome, but he had long time ago abandoned the idea of striking at England through Scotland, and was now thinking in terms of doing it through Ireland.¹¹⁴⁰

Sempill had no intention of abandon his position as Scottish affairs adviser in the Spanish court, and continued informing on these matters to Philip III regularly.¹¹⁴¹ Although the brief hopes he raised when Philip IV ascended to the Spanish throne in 1621;¹¹⁴² he finally had to accept that Spain would never send any aid to Scotland; thus, he decided to open a Scots College in Madrid as the only way of restoring the Catholic faith in Scotland. In his own words, this decision was taken ‘because if the Catholic religion wanted to be maintained in Scotland, there must be a place were the Catholic nobles can send their children to be taught.’¹¹⁴³

In March 1630, Colonel Sempill declared that he had for a long time been thinking about his retirement. He wrote a letter to Philip IV in which he declared that the most suitable individuals to be employed as the new ‘Scottish adviser’ were: Lord Hamilton, who was living in Ireland at the time; James Sempill – his own nephew – living in Scotland; George Leslie living at that time in England; and George Kerr, who was then settled in Rome.¹¹⁴⁴

Philip IV of Spain did not see the necessity of a Scottish adviser, and none of them was appointed. However, another nephew of the Colonel, the Jesuit Father Hugh Sempill, who had pursued his studies in Mathematics at the University of Alcalá de Henares, repeatedly wrote to Philip representing the need to send money and to train soldiers in Scotland.¹¹⁴⁵ Nevertheless, even these true believers had to recognise that Philip II’s death had been the end of the Spanish involvement in Scottish politics.

English Throne,’ *SHR*, xxi (1924), pp. 274.

¹¹⁴⁰ Elder, *Influences*, pp. 273-5.

¹¹⁴¹ SCA, ‘Political documents: Colonel Semple, 1554-1601,’ CA4/1/15-22; SCA, ‘Political documents: Colonel Semple, 1602-1615,’ CA4/2; SCA, ‘Political documents: Colonel Semple, 1616-1622,’ CA4/3.

¹¹⁴² AGS, ‘Discursos de Felipe IV,’ 1621, E Leg. 2035, fo. 42; see also F. Martín Sanz, *La Política Internacional de Felipe IV* (Segovia, 1998), ch. 2.

¹¹⁴³ SCA, ‘Colonel Semple: representation on Scottish affairs,’ 15 Mar. 1630, CA4/5/16, fos. 1-2.

¹¹⁴⁴ *ibid.*, fo. 2.

¹¹⁴⁵ SCA, ‘Clase de papeles de Colonel Semple,’ 1633, CA4/11/8; SCA, ‘Clase de papeles de Colonel Semple,’ 1633, CA4/13/4.

CONCLUSION

Some summary observations about the general nature of the period covered in this study and the particular place occupied in it by Spanish-Scottish relations seem in order. It is only by recognising the importance of political hegemony and military strategy in the mind of many of the policymakers of the time that the international relations between Spain and Scotland come into consistent focus. Personal, dynastic, and economic factors all contributed heavily to the course of events, but it clearly demonstrable that religion also placed a leading role, at least in the policies of Philip II towards Scotland. Given the religious goals and duty incumbent on a Catholic king, Philip's actions are more comprehensible. Yet, it is not always easy to distinguish between Philip's Spanish policy and his Catholic policy for to him they appear to have been synonymous.

By the autumn of 1579, Philip had spent twenty years in Spain as king, more than his father had done in the whole of his reign, and he had emphatically re-established the power of the monarchy. The acquisition of Portugal in 1580 had profound political and indeed psychological importance for Philip, bringing about a dramatic rescheduling of his priorities in foreign affairs. Of course, Philip still had the rebellious Netherlands on his hands, but there were disturbing signs in 1580 that he might be on his way to committing himself to the 'Enterprise of England' and that, if he did, he might hope to rally Catholic Europe to his side.¹¹⁴⁶

The early years of the 1580s brought a sharp change in the emphasis of Spanish policy in Scotland. Scottish politics were never entirely stable and they grew less so for a time as the young James VI grew towards manhood. The apparently anarchic condition of Scotland was a standing temptation to foreign powers, and especially appealing for Spain. In 1580, Mary finally turned to Philip as her main hope for James's conversion to Catholicism, the Catholicisation of Scotland, her liberation and restoration to her sovereignty. Moreover, the establishment of Lennox in the seat of power raised the hopes of Catholics in the kingdom.¹¹⁴⁷ Also, the activities or

¹¹⁴⁶ See Introduction of this thesis.

¹¹⁴⁷ See p. 13 of this thesis.

posturing of Scottish Catholic nobility opened the way to Spanish influence, through their continuous requests for Spain's aid. It was the Jesuits, however, who took the initiative in laying the foundations for a wider and more ambitious plan which they hoped would be backed by both Philip and the Pope. Holt, Crichton, and Hay all went to Scotland in 1581-2.¹¹⁴⁸ In May 1582, a conference was held in France, under Jesuit auspices, to discuss a highly unrealistic plan inspired by Persons and Allen to invade England through Scotland, to secure the king's conversion and the subjection of the kingdom to the Catholic faith. This was to be achieved by an invasion of England by a combined force of Spanish and Scottish troops.¹¹⁴⁹ There can be no doubt that the Jesuits, even though the official stand of the Society was non-involvement, were at this time actively and effectively participating in the affairs of Scotland, and their ambitions made them willing and useful supporters of Spanish policy. Even those who did not support the Spanish candidature for the English throne welcomed Spanish intervention in England and Scotland.¹¹⁵⁰

The co-coordinating brain behind all these plans was Mendoza, a supporter of Mary's case, who was convinced that co-existence with Elizabeth was no longer a feasible policy.¹¹⁵¹ This was an age of personal diplomacy, and the significance of acquaintances such as these can scarcely be overemphasized. Mendoza had gained first-hand experience of the affairs of England and Scotland, until the discovery of the 'Throckmorton Plot' led to his expulsion from the London embassy. His concern with the Scottish problem did not end at this point for Mendoza, now located in the Spanish embassy in Paris; it merely became more tightly entwined with English affairs.¹¹⁵² Olivares was of the same mettle as Mendoza, and the two kept in regular contact through couriered dispatches. Parma was another of Mendoza's closest diplomatic associates,¹¹⁵³ and it should not be forgotten that Sempill had entered into the service of Spain thanks to a reference from Parma and his first diplomatic mission was establishing contacts between Mendoza and the Scottish Catholic nobility.¹¹⁵⁴ It is hardly surprising therefore that although the trio of Mendoza, Olivares and Parma

¹¹⁴⁸ See pp. 41-2 of this thesis.

¹¹⁴⁹ See pp. 52-5 of this thesis.

¹¹⁵⁰ See the case of Father Owen Lewis, bishop of Cassano in pp. 75, 108, 184 of this thesis.

¹¹⁵¹ Jensen, *Diplomacy and Dogmatism*, p. 63.

¹¹⁵² See p. 79 of this thesis.

¹¹⁵³ Jensen, *Diplomacy and Dogmatism*, p. 94.

¹¹⁵⁴ See p. 119 of this thesis.

failed to agree on many points of tactics, they co-ordinated Philip's policies in Scotland and all agreed that action should be taken in Scotland. However, the 1580s and 1590s were not ordinary times. As the hatreds and suspicions of religious struggles mounted, it became increasingly difficult to obtain reliable information and on many occasions Philip had to ask his own staff to supply him with more reliable information.¹¹⁵⁵

In fact, the Spanish King was not yet prepared to fight a crusade for Catholicism in the British Isles and he would not risk a war with Elizabeth to satisfy the ambitions either of his own staff, Mary, the Scottish Catholics, the Pope or the Jesuits or any combination of them. It was not the last time that Philip adopted this attitude when confronted by 'problems': the carefully contrived appearance of 'prudence' that so impressed contemporaries was, very often, an expression of Philip's congenital inability to take decisions quickly, an immobility borne of indecisiveness. But it was also part of the image of majesty that Philip very deliberately created for himself – the image of a king who was coolly aloof and who could not be hurried or pressurised into making decisions and a personality that was devoid of emotion. In consequence, he often finished up by accomplishing very little.¹¹⁵⁶

The extent of Scotland's influence upon the shaping of Spanish policy of this period is difficult to determine, but it is clear that Philip was conscious of the primary necessity of securing mastery within the British Isles as a means to regain control of his rebellious Netherlands and to stop English attacks on the Spanish fleet. The key to achieving that mastery, however, lay with England's neighbours. As we have seen, it was Scotland that could link the discontents of the conservative English north to the turbulence in Ireland. And as long as there were contacts between Spain and the discontents in Scotland, Philip would always have the 'postern gate' into England held open. It was to close that back door, by drawing Scotland into England's orbit, that Elizabeth now turned her attention as soon as she felt herself in serious danger of Spanish attack. Clearly, Elizabeth sought to wean or cajole Scotland from the orbit of Spain, and the way to do it was through its king, James VI, and his ambition to gain the English throne.

¹¹⁵⁵ See for example, Jensen, *Diplomacy and Dogmatism*, p. 104.

From the point at which James emerged from his minority, his attention was focused on his claim to the English crown. The problem was complicated by James's pursuit of a succession of allies in his quest to succeed Elizabeth. During the period as a whole, James was successful in presenting himself as friendly and well disposed towards the Catholic powers. Quite understandably, James looked for help outside England, since Elizabeth did not confirm him as her heir, even after the Anglo-Scottish league was concluded in 1586. Mary's execution after the discovery of the 'Babington Plot' by Walsingham, reinforced James's status as Elizabeth's nearest relative, but even then his accession to the English crown after Elizabeth's death was not assured.

Mary's execution provoked a violent, perhaps histrionic explosion of anger against Elizabeth in Scotland, and for a time communications were interrupted between the two countries. James, however, was astute enough to realize that however much the occasion might demand a display of filial wrath, war with England would only jeopardise his own interests and ambitions. Clearly, only the restoration of the 'amity' or perhaps neutrality would safeguard James's title to the English succession.

In fact, Mary's death had a simplifying effect on the problems with which England was confronted. Except for unforeseen circumstances, it was now probable that James would eventually obtain the crown of England. James certainly was not a Catholic. Consequently, the hopes of some Jesuits, as Persons and Allen, turned to Philip II and the *Infanta*. This, in turn, had a repercussion on the attitude of both English Catholics and the Jesuits, who, while they might conceivably have fought for Mary, had no intentions of helping Philip to obtain the English throne.

The decision to launch a great armada against England had taken tangible form in the mind of Philip II during the summer of 1585, but Mary's execution played its part in convincing Philip that this was the time to stage the invasion of England.¹¹⁵⁷ Long anticipated though it had been, the Armada was a momentous event in European history. The English victory over the Armada was only the beginning of a long

¹¹⁵⁶ Williams, *Philip II*, pp. 45, 142.

struggle against Spain in which Scotland proved to be one of the most decisive theatres of the conflict. The defeat of the Armada of 1588, far from alleviating the Spanish threat to England, merely highlighted its potency. The diversion of funds to engage the Spaniards on the continent and the high seas beggared the Queen. In the war which dragged on until 1604, England's weakest points were undoubtedly Scotland and Ireland. As happened in 1588, and during invasion scares in 1589-90 and 1596-7, contingency plans were made to rush reinforcements to Ireland and to gain James's collaboration in Scotland. The danger from Ireland reached a climax when the earl of Tyrone entered into military relations with Spain.¹¹⁵⁸ But Scotland was not wholly dependable, despite the king's expressions of goodwill, as the abortive conspiracy of the 'Spanish Blanks' in 1592 clearly demonstrated. That crisis had perhaps shown that James was emerging as a mature king, but it also demonstrated that he was still liable to pursue a policy of friendship towards his Catholic aristocrats, such as Huntly, the richest and most powerful Catholic landowner in Scotland.¹¹⁵⁹

When Philip II died in 1598, it was clear that a great figure had passed on and that the political landscape had shifted substantially with his death. Philip's successes and his failures had something epic about them: he had defeated Suleiman, incorporated Portugal into the Spanish realm, bankrupted Spain's treasury, pursued the war in the Low Countries, launched his armadas against England and intervened in the civil wars in France in the 1590s. In truth, Philip's death changed the very nature of European politics. Religious controversies did not cease in 1598 and religious motives in political affairs were prominent for years to come, but it marked a significant step toward creating a predominantly secular approach to political affairs, especially in international relations.

Nevertheless, Philip's intrigues in Scotland involved no massacres or wars of religion. There had been one or two rather half-hearted rebellions and an occasional demonstration of force. Even then, as in the case of Lord Maxwell's two revolts or in the Bridge of Dee affair, the crown did not retaliate with any state executions or mass reprisals. By the end of the century, revolts were things of the past and by 1598 the

¹¹⁵⁷ See p. 112 of this thesis.

¹¹⁵⁸ See p. 187 of this thesis.

¹¹⁵⁹ See p. 170 of this thesis.

crown had achieved a rapprochement with its nobility in which its power was amply confirmed.¹¹⁶⁰ Indeed, by the last days of Philip II, most of the Scottish nobility had been reconciled with the Crown, leaving Philip's policy in ruins. In fact, the Catholic earls and Bothwell were the last nobles ever to stage a serious and direct challenge to the Scottish crown, while being supported in their intrigues by a foreign power.¹¹⁶¹ However, as paradoxical as it seems, James's experiences ruling this volatile Scotland had taught him the necessity of an obedient nobility.¹¹⁶²

But Spain had in 1598 yet to give signal proof of its predominant interest in Scottish politics, despite the persistency of 'the last believers,' Sempill and Bothwell, who still refused to accept the situation that seemed forced upon them. Philip II had expected to bequeath his policy to his son and successor, Philip III. His son's primary concern, however, was the wreckage of his financial resources, and his father's policy was abandoned.¹¹⁶³ When in 1599, Robert, 4th Lord Sempill visited Spain not only did he present James VI's sorrow for Philip II's death, but also represented his claims to the English crown to Philip III.¹¹⁶⁴ Consequently, Thomas Fitzherbert – Philip's English secretary – wrote a memorandum¹¹⁶⁵ suggesting that Philip should suggest a *rapprochement* with Scotland in order to force James to declare himself either for or against Catholicism. Fitzherbert advised Philip to continue his father's pension policy by employing Bothwell 'who, with a little ready money and moderate promise of pensions, might gain over many Scottish Catholics.'¹¹⁶⁶ Subsequently, Bothwell was called to the Spanish court, where he was granted a pension of 250 crowns a month by Philip III.¹¹⁶⁷

Immediately after his arrival, Bothwell wrote a memorandum to Philip III entitled 'Means of establishing the Catholic Religion in Scotland,' in which he proposed a Spanish invasion of England through Scotland.¹¹⁶⁸ Curiously, this memorandum is

¹¹⁶⁰ Goodare & Lynch, *The Reign of James VI*, p. 42.

¹¹⁶¹ Brown, *Bloodfeud in Scotland*, p. 251; Goodare, *State and Society*, p. 143.

¹¹⁶² Brown, 'Scottish Politics,' in Smith, *The Reign of James VI and I*, p. 22.

¹¹⁶³ Williams, *Philip II*, p. 251.

¹¹⁶⁴ SCA, 'Instruction given by King James to Robert Lord Semple, his ambassador to Philip III of Spain,' 1599, CA4/1/14.

¹¹⁶⁵ *CSP Span.*, iv, p. 650.

¹¹⁶⁶ HMC *Salisbury*, viii, pp. 146, 331, 532, 568.

¹¹⁶⁷ *CSP Span.*, iv, p. 680.

¹¹⁶⁸ Elder, *Influences*, p. 276.

clearly based on (if not a copy of) that written by Sempill in 1591.¹¹⁶⁹ Not surprisingly, this plan did not find the approval of the Spanish Council of State, which was committed to a resolution of the 'Irish problem.' Despite all the anxieties created by the so called 'Invisible Armada' in England, where it was rumoured that the King of Scots had 40,000 men ready to join Spain in the invasion of England,¹¹⁷⁰ the danger was now going to come from Ireland, and not Scotland.¹¹⁷¹ The continuous pleas of the Irish through Hugh O'Donnell moved Philip III to send a fleet with troops to support Tyrone's rebellion.¹¹⁷² Three thousand Spanish troops under the command of Juan de Aguila landed in Ireland, an episode which, however, led to the battle of Kinsale on Christmas Eve of 1601 and the final defeat of Tyrone's rebellion.¹¹⁷³ Immediately after this failure, Bothwell left Spain for Naples, where he lived in poverty until his death in 1612.¹¹⁷⁴

The effects of this defeat was not only the consolidation of Elizabeth's grip on Ireland, but its effect on Philip III who, having neither the funds nor the inclination to launch a further armada, started to negotiate for peace with England. When Elizabeth died in March 1603, James was invited to become King James I of England.¹¹⁷⁵ In 1604, Philip III and James concluded a peace treaty.¹¹⁷⁶ Under these circumstances, it was clear that Spain was no longer in a situation to aid the dissidents in Scotland,¹¹⁷⁷ but Sempill still refused to accept the situation.¹¹⁷⁸

Sempill remained as the main expert on Scottish affairs at the Spanish court. Philip III, however, preferred to maintain peaceful relations with England, which meant that

¹¹⁶⁹ See app. iv; BL, Colonel W. Sempill, 'On Scottish affairs. El estado de la religion Catholica en el Reino de Escocia,' 1591, Add. MS 28,420, fos. 140-4; see also p. 171 of this thesis.

¹¹⁷⁰ LNMM, 'Observations and overtures for a sea fight upon our coastes,' 91 LEC/8.

¹¹⁷¹ Werham, *The Return of the Armadas*, pp. 263-72.

¹¹⁷² *ibid.*, pp. 283-96.

¹¹⁷³ García Hernán, *Irlanda y el Rey Prudente*, p. 145.

¹¹⁷⁴ *RPC Scot.*, v, p. 209n; *Scots Peerage*, ii, p. 171.

¹¹⁷⁵ BNM, 'Declaracion que hizo el consejo de Inglaterra a favor del rey de Escocia, Jacobo,' 1603, MS 3826, fos. 73-4; BNM, 'Edicto que los ingleses publicaron declarando por rey de Inglaterra a Jacobo, rey de Escocia,' MS 7456, fos. 21-23v; L. Cabrera de Córdoba, *Relaciones de las Cosas Sucedidas en la Corte de España desde 1599 hasta 1614* (Salamanca, 1997), p. 174.

¹¹⁷⁶ BL, 'Articles of the peace concluded at London betwene James King of England, Scotland and Philip the 3. King,' 18 Aug. 1604, MSS Cott. Vesp., cxiii, fos. 2-9; Cabrera de Córdoba, *Relaciones de las cosas sucedidas en la Corte de España*, p. 587.

¹¹⁷⁷ J.D. Mackie, 'James VI. and I. and the Peace with Spain, 1604,' *SHR*, xxiii (1926), pp. 241-49.

¹¹⁷⁸ BL, 'Carta de traslado de lengua escocesa en español escrita por el barón de Beiltriesal al Colonel Sempill,' 1603, Add. MS 28,420, fo. 13.

his interest in Scotland declined. Nevertheless, Sempill kept the Spanish King regularly informed concerning Scottish affairs with series of memoranda stressing the necessity of aiding Scotland, militarily and religiously. Although he knew that Philip III was not going to undertake a military enterprise, as his father had done, Sempill's efforts were not entirely in vain. He has been hailed as the 'godfather' of the reconstituted Spanish naval armada of the early 1620s.¹¹⁷⁹

Although Sempill did not cease his efforts to convince Philip to take joint military action with Scotland against England until his death in 1630, the outbreak of Bohemian rebellion in 1618 finally destroyed any possibility for Spain of intervention in Scottish affairs.¹¹⁸⁰

The analysis of Philip II's relations with Scotland tells us of a story of failure. Apart from a few minor successes, Philip's intentions to convert Scotland back to Catholicism and turn it into the springboard for the enterprise of England were a complete failure, as were his attempts to restrain Elizabeth from aiding the rebels in the Netherlands and to stop the English attacks against Spanish interest. The possible causes of this failure are unlimited: Scotland's remoteness; James's political cleverness; Elizabeth's effectiveness in her political and diplomatic manoeuvres; Philip's indecisiveness; Spain's over extended foreign preoccupations; and without doubt, the mixture of interest of those involved in these affairs. It is this same mixture of interests to blame for the lobbyism surrounding Philip and poor quality of the information which reached the Spanish King.

But in evaluating Philip's influence in Scotland, the final question that has to be answered is whether there was ever a chance that he might have succeeded. The answer must be in the negative. It is hard to believe that a Scottish Catholic force would have been ready to join the Spanish Armada in the 'enterprise of England,' since who was going to convince the Scottish nobles to join the Armada, the earl of Maxwell, did not believe himself that the fleet would sail.¹¹⁸¹ We will never know if the Catholic earls could have held out against the King after the battle of Glenlivet in

¹¹⁷⁹ He considered him 'the true doyen of the *arbitristas del mar*'. See R.A. Stradling, *The Armada of Flanders: Spanish maritime policy and European war, 1568-1668* (Cambridge, 1992), p. 25.

¹¹⁸⁰ Stradling, *The Armada of Flanders*, p. 26.

1594 if they had received Spanish military support; but the question is not applicable since this aid could have never arrived since Spain could not afford to send an army because its involvement in wars in France and the Netherlands.¹¹⁸² It was this, the fact that Philip could not concentrate on one thing for a reasonable period of time, because he was involved in several projects at the same time, which caused that many of his projects failed.

Philip II's political attitudes towards Scotland are an example of his blindness to the new forces of religion and politics. He wrongly estimated the inherent strength of Protestantism in Scotland (for which the Jesuits and his own diplomatic and information services should be blame), failing to mould his thoughts, beliefs and ideas with the then emerging secularism in European politics.

¹¹⁸¹ Brown, 'The Making of a *Politique*,' p. 165.

¹¹⁸² See p. 182 of this thesis.

APPENDIX I

BL, MS Add. 28,420, fos. 26-30

Descifrada de don Bernardino de Mendoça, 16 de Septiembre 1580

...de Escocia embio esta Reyna un pensionario suyo, que se llama Bos y llegadole y le embia a dezir el Rey que diese quenta de la comission que llevaba a V[uestra] M[ajestad] Obini y por no llevar ninguna mas de yr a hazer officios y tratos con Morton con la occasion de visitar al Rey se huvo de bolver luego y otra que habia resuelto aqui de embiar un Guater Milme que es consejero desta Reyna y grande hereje a aquel Reyno que fue occasion del mandarle entretener, hablan muy publicamente los Ingleses en que esta gente procura de todas maneras apoderarse de aquel Rey.

Deciphered letter from don Bernardino de Mendoza, 16 of September 1580

...this Queen [Elizabeth I] sent to Scotland one of her pensioners, who was called Bos [Robert Bowes] and who, upon arrival [to Scotland], was sent to the King [of Scotland] to give account of the commission that was carried to Your Majesty by Aubigny [Esmé Stewart, Sieur d'Aubigny] and because he did not carry any other [commission] than to go to make offices and deals with Morton with the occasion of the visit to the King, he had to return later and she [Elizabeth I] had also resolved to send here one Walter Miller [unidentified], who is an adviser of this Queen, and a great heretic, to that kingdom which was an occasion to send him to entertain, the English comment very publicly that this people [Protestants] try by all means to take possession of that King [James VI].

APPENDIX II

BL, MS Add. 48,027, fo. 333

Don Bernardino de Mendoza a la Royne d'Escosse, 4 de Abril 1586

Solamente dire, no es tan la voluntad del Rey de francia ny de su madre prompta para la reduccion de Inglaterra castigo de la Reyna que la posee ny tan poco de su parte para defendelle y oponer se que no aya execution que admira a los que lo vemos pues ha hecho por medio del cardinal de Este decir a su santidad no inste al Rey ny Senor que haga l'impresa de Inglaterra lo qual V[uestra] M[ajestad] quanto retardara se los officios en Roma y Espagna los que yo hago y he hecho despues que sali desse reyno adelantando la reduccion del y libertad de V[uestra] M[ajestad] espero en Dios que ha de ser servido de darla en breve a V[uestra] M[ajestad] ablandando el pecho de este Rey de Francia.

Don Bernardino de Mendoza to the Queen of Scots, 4 of April 1586

I will only say, that it is not the wish of the King of France, nor of his mother, the reduction of England, nor the punishment of the Queen [of England] that possesses you [Mary, Queen of Scots], they have done nothing from their part to defend you and oppose your execution; that he [the King of France] admires those who do it, because he has asked the Pope, through Cardinal Este [Hippolito d'Este, Cardinal of Ferrara], not to urge the King [of Scotland] nor the Master [Philip II] to carry out the enterprise of England which, Your Majesty, will delay the offices in Rome and Spain, which I do and I have done after I left that kingdom hastening the reduction of it and liberty of Your Majesty, which I hope God helps us to carry to Your Majesty in brief, softening the chest of this King of France.

APPENDIX III

SCA, CA4/1/6

Instrucciones para el Coronel Sempel de el Duque de Parma,

12 de Noviembre 1589

Recuerdo de lo que habe significar a Su Majestad el Coronel Guillermo Sempel de las cosas de escocia.

1. Primeramente declarara la poca sperança que hay dela fee catholica en el rey de escocia y quam inmerito de reynar por haver consentido el martirio de su madre y alos defectos que hay en el.
2. Sino siendo capaz de Reynar quien de derecho ereda la corona.
3. Declararla no Santa y poder de los catolicos la preparacion pasadas destado presente y la aparencia de lo porvenir.
4. Significar el sitio y disposicion de los estados de escocia y su poder para moverse contra englaterra rescibiendo estrangera o levantandola en el propicio pays.
5. Discurrir de los puertos, playas y paises demas los sitios y comodidades que se pueden sacar dellos.
6. Que forma se podia tenerme por para proveer dineros para entretener la causa enbreve con golpe dellos, o, a la larga en forma de pension o socorros dequando en quando.
7. Como se podran proveer armas y municiones de guerras secretamente y lo que importa tenerles.
8. Que si se quiere intentar algo de presente quan a proposito estas razon y la voluntad con que lo haran confiados de ser moveran deaca con buenos medios y fundamento.
9. Manifiestara el poder de libereses y confederados de Inglaterra la industria que sera la reyna para conservar los socorros que les imbia y las causas que les mueven a seguir este curso.
10. La seguridad que hay deproveer dinero de presente para acudir a los poderes de araemen y Bothwell por las causas que se dicen en vince a 12 de Nobiembre de 1589.

Alejandro Farnesio

Instructions for Colonel Sempill from the duke of Parma,

12 of November 1589

Reminder of what Colonel William Sempill has to signify to His Majesty [Philip II] about the affairs of Scotland.

1. Firstly, he will declare the little hope that there is of Catholic faith in the King of Scotland and how undeserved [is his] sovereignty for having consented to the martyrdom of his mother and the defects that there are in him.
2. If not being able to rule, who of right inherits the crown [?].
3. To declare her ['the accession' of James VI to the English crown] not Saint, power of the Catholics, the past preparations, the present state and the appearance of the future.
4. To signify the situation and disposition of the states of Scotland and their power to move against England receiving a foreign [army] or levying it in the country itself.
5. Think about the ports, beaches and countries, other places and commodities that can be used.
6. In which way I could be used to provide money to support the cause shortly with a blow to them, or, in the long term in form of pension or aids from time to time.
7. How could arms and munitions of war be provided secretly and how important it is to have them.
8. That if something is going to be tried at present how purposeful these reasons are and the will with which they will do it, confident, they will move from here with good means and foundations.
9. He will manifest the power of freemen and confederates of England, the industry that it will be for the Queen [Elizabeth] to conserve the aid that sends them and the causes that move them to follow this path.
10. The security that there is of providing money at present to help 'araemen'¹¹⁸³ and Bothwell for the causes they say. In Vince [unidentified] on the 12th of November of 1589.

Alejandro Farnesio

¹¹⁸³ It is difficult to identify this with any certainty. However, in context, the most likely candidate may be James Hamilton, 3rd earl of Arran, who had already been engaged before with the earl of Bothwell in a plot to seize Mary. Donaldson, *Scotland*, p. 109.

APPENDIX IV

BL, MS Add. 28,420, fos. 140-4.

Colonel Sempill (1591)

‘On Scottish Affairs. El estado de la religion Catholica en el Reino de Escocia.’

Los medios para establecer la Religion Catholica en Escoçia

Para esta empresa no sera menester mas de tres mil hombres de socorro que abran de desembarcar en las yslas de orhnay las quales siendo fuertes de suyo se podran hazer en poco tiempo imprenables de mas de que son fértiles y abundantes de todas cossas necesarias para el sustento del numero sobre dicho y muy cercanas de las fuerças de los de mas principales y poderosos catolicos de escoçia entre los quales es el conde de Cathenes mi hermano ques siglear de todas las tierras de Cathenas que son mas çerca de las yslas de orknay y puede acudirnos con quatro mill hombre que con los dichos juntaran luego con ellos y despues de aver fortificado y asegurando las yslas pasaran a brichti, la tierra firme por el gran rido de forch, que est tan caudalosso que los enemigos no podran pasarlo con cavalleria y la infateria no nos podra hazer daño por aver forcosamente de entrar por el monte de athol: el qual con hazerse solamente fuerte capaz de tre juntos hombre sera inaccesible y aun que le disemos libre entrada no podrian prejudicarnos, assi por la multitud de los nuestros y fortaleza de la tierra como por las inteligencias que tendremos entre ellos: y si quisieren acometernos por mar no podra hazer armada tan fuerte como sera la nuestra, sin que contribuya a ello todo el reyno lo qual no se podra hazer sin juntar todos los estados, de los quales los confederados en esta empresa seremos la mayor parte, y assi el enemigo sera forçado de dar luego libertad de conçiencia a los Catholicos, o ponerse a evidente peligro de perdelo todo.

Los Provechos que resultan desta empresa

V[uest]ra Mag[esta]d sobrara gran honra y reputacion por haver hecho tan senalado servicio a dios y su yglessia: pondra a todos sus enemisgos en tan grande aprieto y gaston tan extrahordinario que gastaran mas en un año que lo han hecho en muchos hasta aqui, por que los holandeses seran forcados o de sustentar una armada no para robar en las indias como hazen aora sino para su defensa o dexar tomar su flota que va cada año a pescar en trestra mar, de que se les seguiria faltase bastimientos navios y marineros y dichos increybles daños y como queria que fuere podremos quitarles a lo menos interrumpir el trato de dinamarca, Hamburg, Lubec, Brema, y emdeng sin el qual no podran vivir: finalmente los de Dunquerque, neuport, y siluse que no tienen agora puertos adonde recogerse los tendran en Orkney con un viento dulce con mucha comodidad suya y daño del enemigo.

Quanto a La Reyna de Inglaterra sino quieren hazer paz ellos seran reduzidos a no menos daños y si ella quisiere impedir nuestra empresa abrade mantener tres exerçitos dos por mar un por la parte del poniente y otro por la del oriente y el terçero por tierra el qual no nos podra hazer mucho daño por no aver de consintir los escoçeses que entren ynglese en escoçia sino fuere con tan poca gente que no podra hazer gran efecto y serian siempre subjectos de ser puestos a todo peligro y de ser echados fuera quando quisieremos hazer y esso por la gran enemistad y diferençia que es y siempre ha sido entre los reynos.

Demas desto los Catholicos inflese que estan aora desterrados o lo estuvieren en adelante podran recogerse alli y entretener con mucha facilidad en ynglaterra qualesquiera tratos y negociaciones para el servicio de dis y de V[uestra] Mag[esta]d y gran perjuicio de la reyna y puede dar socoro y adyuar los irlandeses con todas causas neçesarias y a todas occassions que se ofrescieren.

Quanto al Rey de Francia es solo medio para impedir sus inteniones las quales el piensa para cobrarlas por invasiones de otros, ser por tener escoçia ocupada, a quie in falta le sere forçado acudir si viere alguna novedad alli con asistencia de V[uestra] Ma[jesta]d por lo qual abra muchos menos medios para esternar las tierras o ayudar los enemigos de V[uestra] Mag[esta]d.

A este Proposito se ha tambien de considerar el gran daño que se puede seguir a la yglesia de Dios y a esta monarquia si el rey de escocia siendo hereje y confederado con todos los herejes y enemigos de dios y de españa tuviere lugar durante la vida de la ynglessa de llevar adelante y facilitar su pretension a la Corona de ynglaterra; porque si ella viniere a morir estando el en paz el abra entrado en ynglaterra y acabado su negocio antes que se pueda impedir de aqui y sera mas poderoso enemigo de la yglessia de dios y mas perjudicial a esta monarquia que uvo jamas considerado el gran poder que tendra por mar y tierra con asistencia del de dinamarca su cuñado, holanda y otros ereges su confederados.

Sino ay comodidad al presente de hazer esto pareser que aviendo el Rey de escocia embiado un emabaxador a V[uestra] Mag[esta]d sera bien que V[uestra] Mag[esta]d le embie otro, no tanto para rescivir satisfacion del como para hazerle sospechosso a la reyna de ynglaterra y a todos los hereges de en ambos reynos, de donde resultara que le sera forçossso o echarse en los braços de V[uestra] M[a]g[esta]d o corres peligro de ser echado o muerto por los suyos, y el dicho embaxador podra trea çertificacion a V[uestra] M[a]g[esta]d de todo lo que aqui esta dicho y puede tratar cosas de importancia con amigos vassallos y criados mios y dar inteligencias para servicio de Dios y de V[uestra] M[a]g[esta]d.

Otras cosas ay tambien de mas importancia que no combienen escribir y assi las reservo para dezierlas a V[uestra] M[a]g[esta]d o a qualquiera de su consejo que V[uestra] M[a]g[esta]d fuere servido de señalar a quin dar tambien mas particular quenta y satisfacion de lo que aqui tengo propuesto.

Colonel Sempill (1591)

‘On Scottish Affairs. The state of the Catholic religion in the Kingdom of Scotland.’

The ways to establish the Catholic religion in Scotland

For this enterprise it will not be necessary to have more than three thousand men of aid, who will have to disembark on the Orkney Isles, which being [defensively] strong could be made in a short time impenetrable plus they are fertile and abundant of all the necessary things for the sustentation of the aforesaid number and very near to the forces of the more principal and powerful Catholics of Scotland among which is the earl of Caithness, my brother, who is owner of all the lands of Caithness which are nearest to the Orkney Isles and can come to help with four thousand men who will join them later, after having fortified and assured the isles they will pass to Brichti [Broughty Ferry], the firm land, by the great forth, that is of such great volume that the enemies would not be able to pass it with horses and the infantry will not be able to hurt us because they will be forced to enter through the Atholl mountains: which being strong only with three men together can be inaccessible and even giving them free entrance they could not hurt us, thus because of the multitude of our [men], the strength of the land and the intelligence that we will have among them: and if they want to attack us by sea they will not be able to make an armada as strong as our own, which will not be able to be done without the country contributing to it and joining all the parts, of which the confederates in this enterprise we will be the major part, and thus the enemy will be forced to give later the freedom of conscience to the Catholics, or expose themselves to the danger of losing everything.

The benefits that result of this enterprise

Your Majesty will exceed great dignity and reputation for having done such distinguished service to God and his Church: you will put all your enemies in such trouble and to such an extraordinary expenditure that they will spend more in one year than what they have done in many up to that date, because the Hollanders will be forced to sustain an armada, not to steal in the Indies as they do now, but for their defence or to let them take their fleet that goes every year to fish in this sea, if they continued they will lack of ships and mariners and the aforesaid incredible damages and whatever happens we will be able to take from them, or at least to interrupt the threat with Denmark, Hamburg, Lübeck, Bremen and Emden without which they will not be able to live: finally the people from Dunkirk, Nieuport and Sluys, who, now, do not have ports where to shelter will have them in Orkney with a soft wind, very comfortable for them and damage for the enemy.

About the Queen of England, if they want to make the peace they will not sustain less damage, and if she wants to hinder our enterprise she will have to maintain three armies, two in the sea, one on the West and the other in the East, and the third within the land, which will not be able to provoke much danger because the Scots will not let the English enter into Scotland if it was with so few people that they will not be able to make great effect and they will always be subject to be exposed to danger of being expelled when we want and this is because of the great enmity and difference that is and always has been between both kingdoms.

Apart from this, the English Catholics who are now exiled or are expected to be, will be able to shelter there and be entertained very easily in England whatever deals and negotiations for the service of God and Your Majesty and great damage for the Queen and can give aid and help to the Irish with all the necessary causes and all the occasions that would offer.

Concerning the King of France, it is the only way to hinder his intentions, which he thinks to retrieve by other's invasions, for having Scotland occupied, who in trouble, if he hears any news there, will be forced to come with assistance from Your Majesty for which there will be much less ways to parch the lands or help the enemies of Your Majesty.

For this subject there should also be considered the great damage that comes to the Church of God and to this monarchy if the King of Scotland, heretic and confederated with all the heretics and enemies of God and Spain, during the life of the English [Queen] his pretension to the crown of England would be carried forward and facilitated; because if she dies with him being in peace he would have entered in England and finished his business before it could be hindered from here and it will be the most powerful enemy of the church of God and more harmful to this monarchy than was ever considered, the great power that he will have by sea and land with assistance of the [King] of Denmark, his brother-in-law, Holland and other heretics his confederates.

If there is a commodity at present to make this look as if the King of Scotland had sent an ambassador to Your Majesty it would be good that Your Majesty send another, not only to receive satisfaction but to turn him into a suspicious person for the Queen of England and for all the heretics in both kingdoms, from which will result with him either to throw himself to the arms of Your Majesty or to be in danger of being expelled or killed by his own subjects, and the said ambassador will be able to carry certification to Your Majesty of all that has been said here and can treat the things of importance with my friends, vassals and servants and give intelligence for the service of God and Your Majesty.

There are other things of more importance which are not convenient to write and I reserve them to say them to Your Majesty or to any one of your counsel who Your Majesty will decide to appoint to give also more particular account and satisfaction of what I have here proposed.

HALL, V. MS 504-30205

Godfrey

Norman del Rey masmor

Andrews

El Rey

Diego de chaves orellana mi correg[id]or de las quatro Villas de la costa de la mar o V[uest]ro lugartiniente En el d[ic]ho oficio el Rey de scoçia me a scripto que haviendo servido de hombres muy dignos de credito y çelosos de su buena fama q[ue] muchos subditos suyos y de otras naçiones an exerçitado y exerçitan la mercançia en estos Reinos debaxo de falsos y fingidos nombres señales y sellos suyos falseando la firma de su mano y los sellos suyos y de sus çiudades granjeando su seguridad con solo El patroçinio de su fingido nombre para que de aqui adelante se evita este daño de tanto momento le a paresçido scrivirme sobre ello e jnviar a guillermo orde de generaçion noble de cuya fee y en[tere]ça y de la yndustria con que esto se a de describir esta seguro para que me muestre todo lo que d[e] este engaño Vio y entendio por largo discurso de Tiempo en jngalattera suplicandome que enterado d[e] esto y de su buen Animo para q[ue] El exemplo d[e] este delito no se estienda a otras partes fue servido de mandar dar a este su comisario favor y ayuda para El rremedio y castigo d[e] esto y aviendose en el mi consejo de Guerra Visto conferido y tratado sobre Ello fue acordado que debes mandar despachar la presente en cuya Virtud os ordeno y mando que luego que os fuere presentada enbargueis y hagais embargar todos los navios escoçeses que se hallaren en los puertos de Vuestra Jurisdiccion y la hazienda y mercaderias qu[e] estuvieren tenido y se hallare en Ellos eccepto las que constan ser de Jaques laver david davni thomas Valeuis david balcar thomas Vallart baltar monton thomas enque y hecho me ynviareis rrelaçion de los que fueren con mucha brevedad particularidad y distincion y las mercaderias que tubieren de que gen[er]os y del artilleria Armas y munizioni y gente que En ellos huviere para que visto se de en lo que se huviere de hacer la horden q[ue] convenga de madrid. A 5 de febrero de 1593 años

Yo El Rey

Por man[da]do del Rey n[uest]ro señor

Andres de prada

The King

Diego de Chaves Orellana, my governor of the four towns of the sea-coast,¹¹⁸⁴ or your deputy. In the said office, the King of Scotland has written to me that having learnt by men very trustworthy and zealous of their good fame that many of his subjects and of other nations have exercised and exercise commerce in these kingdoms [Spanish lands] under false and fake names, signals and stamps, faking the signature of his hand and his stamps and those of his cities, gaining their security with the support of their faked name. To avoid from now onwards this damage, he has decided to write to me about it and to send William Orde, a nobleman, of whose faith and integrity and of the industry in which this [matter] will be treated, he is sure that [he] will show to me all of what he saw and understood about this fraud for a long time in England; asking me that advised of it and of his good will not to let the example of this fraud to spread to other parts, he decided to give to this [William Orde] his commissar favour and help for the remedy and for the punishment of this [fraud], and having this [matter] been examined, conferred and discussed in my Council of War, it was agreed about this that you should order the dispatch of the present [letter], in which I order and command you to do after it [this letter] is presented to you, you will seize and order to seize all the Scottish ships that are in the ports under your jurisdiction, also their properties and commodities that they have and that are found in them except those of Jacques Laver, David Davni, Thomas Valeuis, David Balcar, Thomas Vallart, Baltar Monton [and] Thomas Enque and you will send me relation very shortly particularly and distinctively of who they were and of the commodities they had, of which class and of the artillery, weapons and munitions and people that were in them; thus, once seen, a suitable order about what has to be done would be given, from Madrid, on the 5th of February of 1593.

I the King

By order of the King our Lord

Andres de Prada

¹¹⁸⁴ It refers to the four Cantabrian harbours of: Santander, Laredo, Castro Urdiales and San Vicente de la Barquera.

HBLL, Vault MS 504-30501

812

Diego de Chaves de Orellana. mi Corregidor de las quatro villas de la Costa de la
Mar. ha servido por Vra. Carta de los 29 de Marzo pasado lo que despus lema de
la gente de Mar se haiva de suantar en este Corregimiento. y en particular
dadas que sepidis vos auisen para conforme alho entender lo mas cierto: y
en conformidad dello. os encargo y mando que apays dilig. en saber lo
serviran de su voluntad por supuesto que el Vra. se notadeser luego y se
acabado se volveran a sus casas. y avisarais me dello: De San Francisco
de Mayo de 1593. etc.

23. 47.

23. 47.

Por man del Rey menor
En desagrado

El Rey

Diego de chaves orellana mi Correg[id]or de las quatro villas de la Costa de la Mar por v[uest]ra Carta de los nueve del passado se ha visto como havjendo aportado a la Villa de laredo un navio escoçes con solo un recaudo que dize El m[aest]re es su pasaporte y vino con v[uest]ra carta y q[ue] por no ser de los exçeptados en El despacho que alla Teneis la haviades embargado q[ue] fue assy bien pero porque por solo El d[ic]ho recaudo no se puede Juzgar lo que es El d[ic]ho navio y lo q[ue] mas se preten de conviene y assy os lo ordeno y mando que en reçiviendo esta hagays venir aquy al d[ic]ho M[aest]re que con su venida se ordenara lo que convenga De Aranjuez A Prim[er]o de mayo de 1593

Yo El Rey

Por man(da)do del Rey n(uest)ro señor

Andres de prada

The King

Diego de Chaves Orellana my governor of the four towns of the sea-coast¹¹⁸⁵ by your letter [dated] of the ninth of the past [month] it has been shown how a Scottish ship having harboured in the town of Laredo with only one collection that according to the master it is his passport and came with your letter and because [he] is not one of the exempts in the dispatch that you have there, you have seized it, which was like that well [done], but because the said collection cannot be judged which is the said ship and what is intended, it suits and thus I order and command you when receiving this [letter] to send here the said master that with his coming what is suited will be ordered. From Arajuez on the first of May of 1593.

I the King

By order of the King our Lord

Andres de Prada

¹¹⁸⁵ It refers to the four Cantabrian harbours of: Santander, Laredo, Catro Urdiales and San Vicente de la Barquera.

APPENDIX VII

HBL, Vault MS 504-30522

el Rey

Diego de Sabes de Orellana, mi corregidor de las quatro villas de la costa de Lema, el maestre que yndiastes aqui. En cumplimiento de lo que se os ordeno sea visto y examinado y sabiendo entendido por lo que adiaho. que en ay de lo en el negocio apaxado. remittirlos y ordenarlos y mandados como lo hago. que examiniis. la demas gente del Honorio y veais si se conforman en los nombres. y en lo que toca a suriage. y a la navegacion q. son hechos. y la parte donde son. y al fin con que el emperador. y que no se contradiziendo los dias yz de su m. conuenio que esta en mi voluntad. de Aranjuez a. 22. de mayo de 1593 a. 1.

[Signature]

Por mandado del Rey nuestro

Endres de la Cruz

[Small scribble]

el Rey

diego de chabes de orellana, mi corregidor de las quatro villas de la costa de la mar, el maestre que ynbiastes aqui en cumplim[ien]to de lo que se os ordeno se a visto y examinado y habiendo entendido por lo que a dicho que no ay dolo en el negoçio aparecido rremitiroslo y ordenaros, y mandaros como lo hago que examineis la demas gente del d[ic]ho nabio, y veais si se conforman en los nombres y en lo que toca a su viage y a la navegación q[ue] han hecho y la parte donde son y al fin con que venieron, y que no se contradiciendo los deseeis yr librem[en]te con su nabio que esta es mi voluntad, de Aranjuez a 22 de mayo de 1593 a[ñ]os

Yo El Rey

Por man[da]do del Rey n[uest]ro señor

Andres de prada

The King

Diego de Chaves Orellana, my royal governor of the four towns of the sea-coast,¹¹⁸⁶ the master that you sent here following what was ordered to you, has been received and examined and having understood by what he has said that there is not fraud in the business, it has been decided to refer and order and command you, as I do, to examine the other people of the said ship, and to verify if they are in accordance with the names and in what concerns to their travel and in the navigation that they had done and where are they from and with which aim did they come and not contradicting [themselves] let them go free with their ship that this is my will, at Aranjuez on the 22nd of May of 1593.

I the King

By order of the King our Lord

Andres de Prada

¹¹⁸⁶ It refers to the four Cantabrian harbours of: Santander, Laredo, Castro Urdiales and San Vicente de la Barquera.

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¹¹⁸⁷ See also the translated version by T. Brumen. BL, 1368.C.8.

¹¹⁸⁸ BL, 860.k.13.

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